

The Home HANDYMAN

June 2016 • Vol 23 No 5
R35.00 (incl VAT)



SA'S
ORIGINAL
DIY
MAGAZINE

Renew your window frames

Signs that maintenance is needed

How to revive wood and steel frames

Wood varnish vs sealants



**HOW TO MAKE A
PICTURE FRAME**



**WOOD PAINTING
TECHNIQUES**

+plus

Give your ceiling a new look

How to do repairs, add
bulkheads, modernise cornices
and improve insulation



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How to restore wooden antiques and furniture

The Home **HANDYMAN** **MAGAZINE**

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I try my hand at furniture repair and restoration

This month's main feature is about ceiling repair, cornice options and bulkheads. It must be said that, after some research, it appears that a full ceiling replacement is a messy business and not for the faint-hearted. On the other hand, replacement of individual gypsum boards or repair of holes accidentally punched through the ceiling by a broomstick or pool cue are entirely within the capacity of the enthusiastic DIY'er.

For a quick upgrade, sealing gaps and updating cornices is simple, while bulkheads have gained massive popularity over the past few years. A frame for a bulkhead can be made from brandering and adds character to a flat ceiling, making them especially effective in entrance halls.

Another important part of home maintenance is the protection and sealing of wooden and steel window frames. Caring for timber window frames will ensure that they need never be replaced. In this issue, you will find information on what maintenance to carry out and how often to do it.

The woodworking theme for this month is furniture restoration and upcycling. Sanding sealer is an indispensable asset when it comes to furniture restoration. It hides many sins, including damage made many years ago. I recommend thinning the sanding sealer with lacquer thinners as much as 1:1 to improve drying time and ease of application.

On that note, I decided to try my hand at restoring a 50-year-old side table. For me, the most enjoyable part was the relative ease with which the pieces came together, resulting in some sought after instant gratification. I'll be honest and say that it didn't come out perfectly, but was something I enjoyed nonetheless.

The truth is that restoring a piece to near original isn't always worth the effort and doesn't always do it justice. If you prefer, you can use paint to create special effects. This allows you to get creative and can also save items destined for the rubbish dump.

To continue the theme, regular contributor Clifford Roberts and woodworker Andries Eyegelaar upcycled an old organiser cabinet into a bathroom cabinet housing a basin. They explain the steps they took and give some useful tips with regard to the modification and fitting of the fixtures required.

This issue is fully packed with more content than I can mention here, which I hope doesn't go unnoticed – enjoy the read.

Gareth Greathead, Editor



The Home HANDYMAN

www.homehandyman.co.za

The Home Handyman is published by Home Handyman Publishing cc ck2000/036356/23
PO Box 48, Cramerview, 2060
10 Cypress Avenue, Bryanston Ext. 3, RSA
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By hotline phone: 011-462-5645 / 5796 / 3213
By fax: 086-551-0749
Online: www.homehandyman.co.za
Subscription enquiries:
Candida Giambo-Kruger
Tel: 011-462-5645 / 5796 / 3213
email: admin@homehandyman.co.za

Subscription rates:
SA: R296.00 (incl VAT) for 11 issues
Reproduction: AstraGraphics
Printing: Paarl Media KZN, Mahogany Ridge, Westmead, Durban
Distribution: Republican News Agency

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CONTENTS

FEATURES



Competitions & giveaways

- WIN** a Makita DML801 18V Flashlight plus battery.....7
WIN a Bessey Utility Folding Knife Set 11
WIN a 1510W 185mm Stanley Circular Saw..... 36
WIN an Alcolin adhesive and sealant hamper.....62

Cover pic courtesy Swartland

12 Ceilings, cornices and bulkheads

Ceiling and cornice options as well as guidelines on basic ceiling construction and repair

18 Replastering

Why plaster falls from walls and ways to prevent it happening

22 Give old window frames new life

A step-by-step guide on how to breathe life into old wooden and metal frames

26 Painting wood

Revive dull wooden pieces with specialist wood painting techniques

30 Restored to glory

Our editor restores an antique furniture piece

34 Woodworker's profile

Brothers Christopher and Gregory Lambrechts share their passion for restoring furniture of historical significance

37 Tree of the month

Uses and characteristics of imbuia, a tree indigenous to Brazil

38 Picture frame project

Make a mitred picture frame to showcase memorable moments

41 Duct tales

Duct tape is an indispensable material used in many different pursuits

42 Gantry cane project

Reader Kevin Olson designs and builds his own gantry crane

46 Upcycle a cabinet for your bathroom

A piece of furniture can become outdated, but often all it needs is a simple tweak to regain usefulness

50 Jigsaws

The development, blades, features and uses of jigsaws



12

REGULARS

4 Off the shelf

All the latest products for the DIY'er

6 Voice your views

Your chance to air an opinion

8 DIY matters

Events, news, views and reviews from around the globe

10 Ask our experts

Your DIY queries answered by our panel of experts

36 Bright ideas

Readers share their innovative time- and space-saving DIY ideas

52 Woodworker's diary

Part two of a three-part series describing how Denis Lock made bedside pedestals

56 Woodworker's corner

An opportunity for readers to showcase their work

61 Let's get social

Find out what's happening in the DIY world on social media

62 Subscriptions

Save by subscribing to *The Home Handyman* and win great prizes

64 Tailpiece

Reuben the Screwman is invited to *3Talk with Noeleen*, but dresses in black for a spring day television insert



50



52



30



26

Shape cutting master

The Makita 18V Brushless Jig Saw DJV182ZK offers superior runtime because there is none of the friction and heat associated with conventional brushed motors. The reduction in heat means that the tool can be used for a longer period of time even in hard industrial applications requiring continuous operation. Another benefit of brushless technology is that the lifespan of the battery is increased due to the lighter load on the powerpack. Battery, charger and dust nozzle are sold separately.

Special features and specifications:

- Variable speed
- Electric brake
- Orbital action
- Bayonet shank
- Built-in job light
- Carry case
- Optional dust nozzle
- Capacity:
 - wood – 135mm
 - steel – 10mm
- Stroke length: 26mm
- Strokes per minute:
 - 800-3 500
- Weight: 2.6kg



For more information

Visit: www.makita.co.za
Tel: 011-878-2600

Prevent spotted ceilings

A.Shak RoofFix is a flexible compound for repairing loose ridge tiles as well as broken or cracked roof tiles. Exceptional adhesion properties mean RoofFix can also be used as a crack filler and skim plaster. When bonding ridge and roof tiles, roof paint can be added to the RoofFix or painted over it when it is dry to match the colour of the tile.



For more information

Visit: www.ashak.co.za
Tel: 086-112-7425



New plunge saw

Newco Power Tools, distributors of Toni power tools and machinery, recently released the Toni TPS-115 plunge saw. The saw comes with three guide rails which enable accurate ripping of wood without a tablesaw. If you managed to do this with your circular saw in the past this plunge saw will shorten the time it took to set up your own fence.

Special features and specifications:

- Three blade types
- 3 x 300mm guide rails
- Clamping and jointing kit
- Input power: 1 050W
- No-load speed: 12 000rpm
- Blade size: 115 x 22.2mm
- Max cutting capacity: 30mm



For more information

Visit: www.newcopowertools.co.za
Tel: 011-315-1504

Skeleton jigsaw blades



The MPS range of jigsaw blades, distributed by Vermont Sales, are some of the most advanced blades available. MPS spends a lot of time and money testing and developing its blades to improve and better their cutting capabilities. One of its most recent creations is the lightweight Skeleton jigsaw blades.

The name Skeleton was adopted because there are eight laser cut elongated holes running down the length of the blade. The design prevents the blade from overheating and gives you a faster, cleaner cut. These holes also help to keep the cutting line clear by clearing sawdust and debris more efficiently while cutting. Available from leading hardware retailers nationwide.



For more information

Visit www.vermontsales.co.za
Tel: 011-314-7711

Workshop in a box

The POWER8Workshop's design is centred around an armoured case that makes use of four cordless power tools and the patented 18V POWERhandle system. The compact combo kit comes with a jigsaw, circular saw, drill driver and work light. Each power tool uses the same battery, but most impressive is that individual tools, along with the universal battery, can be attached to the armoured case to create an eight-function workshop. All of the tools fit into a canvas bag that fits into the armoured case for easy transportation.

Special features and specifications:

- 18v 2.6Ah Li-ion POWERhandle
- 140mm-diameter circular saw blade
- Jigsaw with quick release multi-blade mechanism
- 3W LED work light
- Stainless steel post/fence with drill press return spring
- Fixed metal protractor
- Work clamp



For more information

Visit: www.thebrostore.co.za
Tel: 012-460-2806



All-in-one sealant



With 101 things to do around the home, knowing what product to use can be puzzling and demotivating. Sikaflex-11FC can be used for many different applications inside and outside the home. It is paintable, sandable and won't shrink, unlike many fillers, meaning you get the job done right the first time.

Applications:

- Reattaching loose weatherboards
- Fixing loose roof or floor tiles
- Sealing around concrete stairs
- Sealing of masonry between bricks
- Sealing window and door frames



For more information

Visit www.sika.co.za
Tel: 031-792-6500

No fixings required



Alcolin Skirting Board Adhesive is a low VOC (volatile organic compound), flexible adhesive with gap filling properties, which can be used to bond polystyrene and wooden skirting boards to cement and plaster surfaces. It is white and can be painted with PVA, acrylic or enamel paint.

Properties and applications:

- Good initial grab
- Can be painted over
- Low shrinkage
- Good flexibility
- Strong adhesion to a variety of substrates
- Bonds lightweight tiles to various substrates
- Ready-mix paste



For more information

Visit: www.alcolin.com
Tel: 021-555-7400

Power is king



The new 1400W MCop1723 Circular Saw from Fragram has a high powered 1400W motor which enables rapid cutting in the most demanding of situations. A sturdy guide base plate with an easily adjustable bevel selector ensures precision cuts time and time again. To prevent common fatigue, ergonomically crafted rear and front grips finish of this perfect DIY woodworking companion.

Special features and specifications:

- 65mm cutting depth at 90°
- 45mm cutting depth at 45°
- No load 4800 rpm
- Blade diameter 185mm
- 24 month warranty



For more information

Visit: www.lgtools.co.za
Tel: 031-717-6800

Attention metalworkers:

Do you do metalwork? If so, we would like to hear from you. Send us pictures of projects you have done. Invitations to your workshop would be appreciated and I hope we can work together on projects too. This would enable me to take pictures, ask questions and learn in the process. Contact Gareth on gareth@homehandyman.co.za

All about trees

Dear *The Home Handyman*, thank you to all those involved in producing such a great magazine. I have been a subscriber for a number of years and have seen the quality of articles improve significantly since you have taken over editorship.

I am a DIY'er and have done a beginners woodturning course with Mr Speedy, who runs courses at Hardware Centre in Randburg, and now do wood lathe work. On top of that, I carry a chainsaw in my bakkie and when I see a building site felling trees, I harvest a few trunks and bring them home, but I don't know what types of wood they are. I am not a tree recognition expert, except maybe when it comes to jacarandas and pine trees.

Some suggestions:

1. How about an article on types of wood? This may include information on different types of wood, hard versus soft wood, different colour variations or species, commonly stumbled upon indigenous

trees as well as exotics, their availability and best uses.

2. An article on glues – this could include wood glues, super glues, epoxies, approximate drying times, which ones cure clear or opaque and what works best for a particular job. Furthermore, how



Winning letter

This month's winning letter comes from Alan Sacks who wins a Makita DUB182Z 18V Cordless Blower

adhesives work, including the molecular structure, which ones need pressure pots and which don't. Also, what can be done with resins and how hardeners or catalysts work together and the benefit of using products like these.

3. I'm looking for more technical information about paints, such as the molecular chemical basis of paints. How do water-based paints (acrylic/latex) differ from solvent (oil-based) paints and which are most suitable for certain applications.

Alan Sacks, Sydenham

Ed responds: Hi Andrew, thank you for your letter and article proposals. Generally speaking, woodworkers love trees as much as they do woodworking. Learning about the different trees and their properties and interesting facts is just as enjoyable as the woodworking itself. In the January/February issue of *The Home Handyman*, we had an article called 'Fundamentals of solid timber'. The article covered the basics like hard and soft wood, their makeup and similar. In the same issue, we had another article titled 'A fascinating indigenous tree', which went on to explain the properties of leadwood and many other interesting facts.

We covered glues briefly last year with help from Alcolin; there was a lot of useful information about the different types of glue and their intended application. That said, there is a lot to say about glues and we will be doing more in the future. I love resin and plan to do projects and offer information on this versatile medium. With a lot of interest in trees being shown by readers, I will happily do a 'tree of the month' and we will be looking at imbuia in this issue.

'Off the Shelf' proves its worth again

In a letter to *The Home Handyman*, seen in the April edition, I complimented you on the OTS page and now wish to add emphasis to what I said. I found immediate use for Alcolin's self-fusing Silicone Tape as well as the Tork Craft Sanding Belt Cleaner in the same issue. I was totally unaware of these products and they have certainly helped with a project I'm busy with and have become a stocked item in my little workshop.

Malvin O'Donovan, by email

Ed responds: Thanks again for your input and ongoing interaction. When I came across these products, I knew they would be of great value to readers and it seems my assumption was correct!



Blow your tools clean

Thank for the very comprehensive article *The Home Handyman* did on electric sanders a few months back. I believe one very important part of prolonging the life of power tools was left out. As a rule I blow out the dust from power tools with compressed air before packing them away. I stumbled upon a very useful product to prolong the life of belts and sanding discs. Tork Craft makes a Belt Cleaning Stick that costs approximately R130. The one I have works very well and has already cleaned many a belt.

Thank you for a magazine that is always full of practical tips.

Nic Acker, Tamboerskloof

Ed responds: Thank you, Nic, you are quite right; many people these days have a compressor in their workshop, so why not use it? I imagine this must be the best way to clean dust or debris from a power tool without disassembling it. The sanding disc cleaner you refer to made by Tork Craft is brilliant. Anyone looking for more information on the sanding stick can have a look at the 'Off the Shelf' page in the April issue.

WIN!

A Makita DML801 18V Flashlight plus battery

Share your opinion

Send us your views, ideas and opinions addressed to
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Fax: 086 551 0749

By mail: PO Box 48, Cramerview, 2060

Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Please note: Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery once the issue is on the shelf. The prize sponsor sends out the prizes. Prizes are not exchangeable.



Working with Wood Show



Sales manager at Vermont Sales, Greg de Villiers shows visitors how to use a Kreg Pocket-Hole Jig

Established in Knysna, the Working with Wood Show is one of Africa's most diverse woodworking and woodcraft events, attracting over 2 500 visitors annually. This year the show is organised and sponsored by Vermont Sales in conjunction with Austro, and will be held from 8-11 June at the Austro warehouse, 1125 Leader Avenue, Roodepoort.

Sales manager at Vermont Sales Greg de Villiers says, "This is the first time the show will be held at Austro's facilities in Roodepoort. If you're into woodworking, this show will blow your mind – we will be demonstrating and showing off the latest tools from all over the world."

Vermont Sales is home to over 50 famous international brands, including Tork Craft, Bessey, Triton, Pro-Tech router bits, Kreg, Triton and Festool. Austro is a supplier of specialist woodworking machinery.

A priority of the organisers is to support and showcase sustainable timber production. Many South African and international demonstrators will share their woodworking skills and crafts with visitors at the show. Some of the topics covered will include woodturning, carving, chair making, sharpening, pyrography, boatbuilding and furniture making.



For more information

Visit: www.workingwithwood.co.za
Email: info@workingwithwood.co.za
Tel: 011 314 7711

A once-in-a-lifetime experience

For the past few months, tool company Stanley has run a competition with Stanley Black+Decker's international football partner, FC Barcelona. In order to enter the competition, entrants had to purchase Stanley tools to the value of R300 or more from a local retailer and send an sms to a specified number.

Entrants stood a chance to win a grand prize of a trip for themselves and a plus-one to a 'money can't buy experience' to see Barça live in Barcelona. The runners-up received Stanley hampers.

Marinus de Villiers, a sports science student from Stellenbosch University, won the competition and has since competed in

► Main prize winner, Marinus de Villiers with Riaan Pieterse, External Sale Manager at Stanley Black and Decker SA

the Stanley Barcelona Striker Challenge. Marinus says, "I feel that such an opportunity does not come very often and it is actually the first time I have ever won such a major competition. It feels unreal, but very exciting at the same time."

The two runners-up were, Sean Lachenicht and Trudie Keys from Gauteng. Sean bought an 18V cordless hammer drill from Makro in Centurion as a gift for his dad. Trudie bought Stanley tools from Makro in Centurion as a present for her husband.



Be inspired by art

If you love art, then visit the Turbine Art Fair, brought to you by The Forum Company, at the Turbine Hall in Newtown from 14-17 July. The fair aims to promote new artwork and rising talent to create a new collector base of these pieces. Exhibitors, including galleries, collectives and dealers, will exhibit contemporary artwork priced below R40 000.

Managing Director of The Forum Company Glynis Hyslop says, "The Turbine Art Fair has made its mark as one of the must attend art fairs annually. Over 50 galleries and exhibits from across South Africa will be showcasing the finest contemporary and emerging African talent. Turbine Art Fair is not just an art fair but a lifestyle event!"

Visitors will also be able to take part in the free daily interactive talk's programme sponsored by Artinsure.

Opening times and event schedule:
Thursday, 14 July: 6pm-10pm
(opening preview evening)
Friday, 15 July: 10am-8pm (public, pensioners, scholars and students)
Saturday, 16 July: 10am-6pm
Sunday, 17 July: 10am-5pm
Tickets: R100; full weekend pass – R200; preview evening – R500

For more information

Visit: www.webtickets.co.za
Facebook: www.facebook.com/turbineartfair



Wooden floor squeaks

The Home Handyman has helped my husband, a keen handyman, to fix, change or do so many things in the past, but now he is now stumped!

We have just bought a very old house with the most beautiful Oregon pine solid wood floors, which have been well maintained through oiling and polishing, and it appears as if these floors have, at some stage been varnished, although most of this has worn off.

Our problem now is how to stop these floors from squeaking! It seems as though there is nowhere you can step without the floors squeaking. People have suggested sprinkling baby powder on the floors, but we cannot believe that baby powder alone can solve this problem.

We love the floors, but the squeaking is really quite annoying. Is there another, more permanent, way to solve this problem?

Desire Hanekom, Namibia

Frikkie Greef, managing director at Woodoc, replies: Annoying floor squeaks, common in many homes, typically occur after the house has settled and the flooring timber has dried out and shrunk. As you walk across the floor, the boards rub against each other or slide against nail shafts to produce a cacophony of squeaks and creaks. If you can get below the floor, it is relatively easy to fix the problem by reinforcing the joists and bearers to firm up support of the floor. Unfortunately, in most instances, you cannot get into the space below the floor and must fix it from the top, which is much more difficult, but not impossible.

There are a few things you can try:

1. Use the baby powder trick suggested by your friend. Baby powder is extremely

fine talcum and possesses wonderful lubricating properties. For this trick to work, the baby powder must get in-between the floorboards. The easiest way to do this is to sweep the baby powder over the floorboards and try to get it into the gaps between the boards. A little bit of judicious stomping on the floorboards in the process will help to open the gaps for the baby powder. Graphite powder also works very well, but is somewhat messy.

2. Application of Woodoc Deep Penetrating Furniture Wax to the floor, with special care to get the product into the gaps, will give short- to medium-term relief. If the

gaps between the floorboards are of a reasonable size, driving a thin, wooden shim in-between the floorboards at strategic places will place the boards under some tension and prevent squeaking. The shim is driven in for as far as it will go without damaging the floorboard and then cut off flush with the floorboard.

If all else fails, the squeaky floorboards are a wonderful extra burglar alarm or curfew enforcer!



For more information

Visit: www.woodoc.com
Tel: 046-645-1109

Tamper proof screws

I'm looking for a particular driver bit; it's not a Pozidriv nor a Phillips, but a new one now used by appliance manufacturers. The screw head has three flutes instead of the four flutes, and I have not been able to find it at hardware stores nor specialist suppliers I have tried.

Eric Jacobson, by email

Greg De Villiers, product manager at Vermont Sales, replies: I believe what you are looking for is a tri-wing bit, which was originally used in aviation. It has been adopted by various industries for reasons you have already described. The bit is supplied by Vermont Sales and stocked by many hardware stores countrywide.



For more information

Visit: www.vermontsales.co.za
Tel: 011-314-7711

Tri-wing and y-type screw bits



Making a swimming pool smaller

I have a gunite swimming pool with a marble-plaster finish. The pool has a volume of approximately 50 000 litres. Due to the water shortage in the Western Cape, I have decided to reduce the size of my pool. I intend building a wall across the width of the pool using cement blocks. The wall will have to be 4.5m long by 1.6m high.

My questions are:

1. How do I anchor the wall to the bottom and sides of the gunite pool?
2. As I progress with building the wall, do I fill the block cavities with mortar or concrete?
3. What waterproofing product should I mix with the mortar for plastering the finished wall?
4. Is there paint on the market that I can paint the completed pool with? The marble finish is very rough as the pool is 40 years old. Some of the marble finish has also worn away and there are some faint cracks. The pool doesn't leak and topping up is only required during summer due to evaporation.

Terry Brown, by email

Sharl Bennie, independent building expert, replies: Drilling steel rebar pins into the

Winning query

This month's winning query comes from Terry Brown who wins a Triton cordless twin pack (TRI T12TP) from Vermont Sales



existing gunite wall is a good way to anchor the brickwork. I find it better to alternate the angle of the bars slightly in different directions for additional strength (8mm rebar is good). The wall should be completed in a single session and a brick force should be placed at least every second line to reinforce the brickwork (these can be bought at building supply shops). Give the wall enough time to cure and then backfill the unused cavity left on

one side. This is done by laying plenty of compaction in layers not exceeding 150mm at a time. Do not use large pieces of building waste in the backfilling – it does not compact very well..

Cindy Engels, sales and marketing director at A.Shak, replies: When the new wall has been completed as per the given advice, paint the blockwork with a slurry made up of two parts river sand and one part cement mixed with TileLoc, which will waterproof and provide a good bonding key to the plaster. You can always paint another coat of two parts cement mixed with one part TileLoc over the plaster to give an additional waterproof membrane; a double barrier is always better.



For more information

Building expert Sharl Bennie:
Tel: 082-554-1921
Ashak: www.ashak.co.za
Tel: 011-822-2320

WIN!

A Bessey utility folding knife set from Vermont Sales

Ask our experts

Send us your DIY queries and you could win!

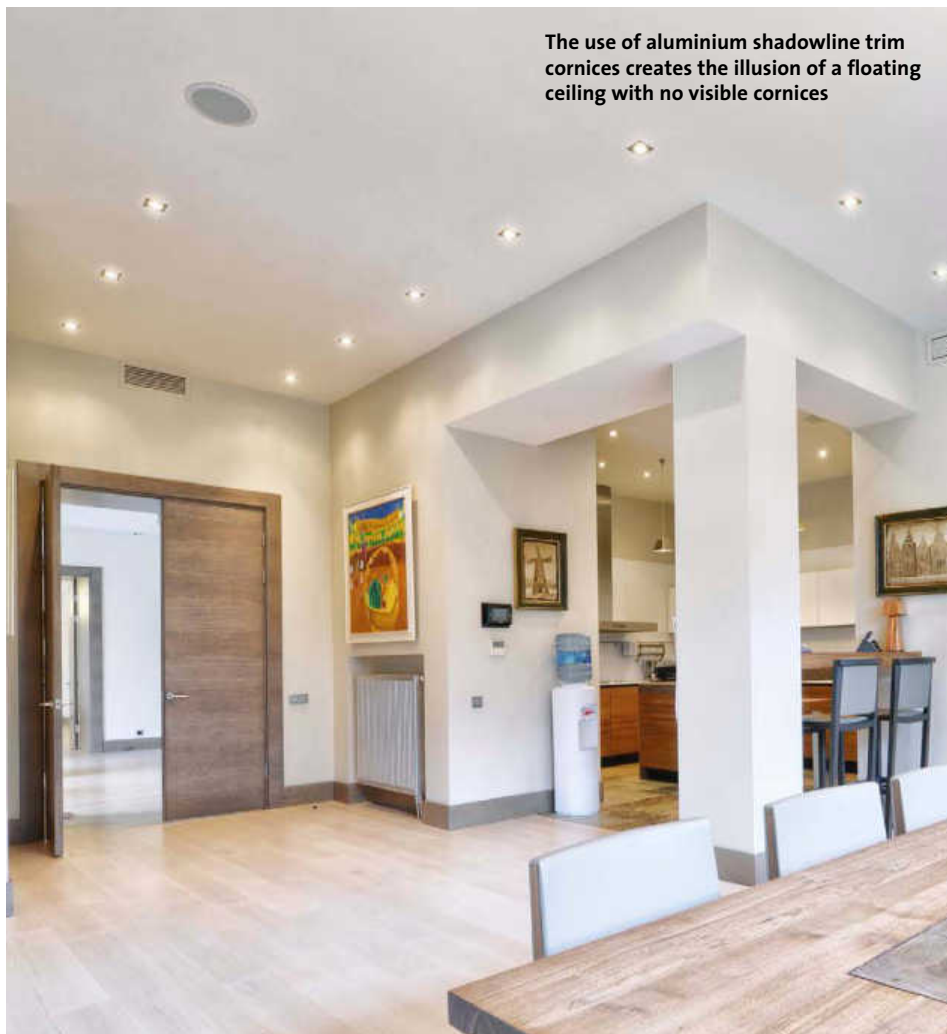
Send your query to:
The Home Handyman DIY Queries,
PO Box 48 Cramerview, 2060 or Fax: 086-551-0749
Email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za
Remember to include your physical address and telephone number during office hours.

Please note: Queries will be answered in the magazine. Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery and are sent by the prize sponsor. Prizes are not exchangeable.



Look up with confidence

Often neglected, ceilings are, in fact, essential elements in a room's design. Here are some ceiling and cornice options as well as guidelines on basic ceiling construction, repair and fixing



The use of aluminium shadowline trim cornices creates the illusion of a floating ceiling with no visible cornices

Types of ceilings

Upgrade and repair sad and sagging ceilings into new, smart and modern features using technically superior ceiling options.

Most ceilings are made from plasterboard. Common 6mm ceiling boards are screwed into bracing and joined with a steel H-strip in-between the boards.

“People wanting to modernise their homes often opt for a 9mm flush-plastered ceiling,” says Richard.

This type of ceiling is constructed from 7mm or 9mm plasterboard fixed to steel or timber bracing with drywall screws. The installed boards are then skimmed with a ceiling plaster like RhinoLite, which can be painted once it has set and dried. Ceiling joint tape is used to seal the gaps left in-between the ceiling boards instead of the H-strip. This results in a jointless ceiling system that lends itself to the addition of modern bulkhead designs.

“Flush acoustic plasterboards are used in areas where acoustics are important, such as cinema rooms or bar areas.” These 12mm plasterboards have regular or irregular perforations and the backs of the

There is a wide range of ceiling styles available for homes today, from the simple surface that is scarcely noticed to dramatic, decorative ceilings with bulkheads, floating bulkheads, cornices and level changes that really grab your attention.

A room’s ceiling can have a big impact on features like the lighting design and its thermal and acoustic properties, which are important considerations for living areas as well as home theatres. Richard Fenton of Pelican Systems, a supplier of interior systems for homes, says, “Ceilings are as essential a part of interior design as the furniture, ornaments, floors and wall finishes.”

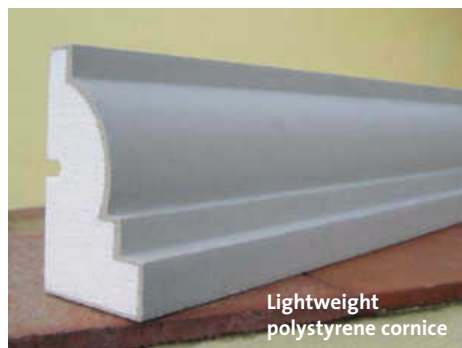


Wooden ceilings give the feeling of warmth from above

boards are covered with an acoustic fleece. Sound waves are able to penetrate and be absorbed by the boards. Finishing and decorating the boards is the same as for flush-plastered ceilings.

High density, extruded polystyrene ceilings offer a flush-plastered ceiling look, but are constructed from a high density rigid polystyrene board. "The benefit comes in increased thermal properties, resulting in a well-insulated ceiling."

"Pine tongue and groove ceilings are making a bit of a comeback and there are still homeowners who enjoy the warmth of wood above them." Here, knotty pine tongue and groove planks fit into each other and are fixed to steel or timber branderings.



Lightweight polystyrene cornice

Cornices

"Ceiling cornices allow for an elegant transition between the wall and the ceiling. They are an excellent tool to help hide small defects at corners and to join materials of different thickness, as well as adding architectural interest."

Paper-covered gypsum

This is probably the most commonly used cornice in homes today. It is relatively inexpensive, but rather heavy. It is relatively easy to install, but the weight can cause a section to bend and snap if it is not supported correctly. Steel 'clout' nails are used to fix this corning into position. Assistance will be required to hold the cornice while you nail it firmly in place. High tack adhesives can also be used.



Fasten as many screws as needed to secure the plaster to the lath

Ceiling repair guide

Step 1 – clean: Before repairing a damaged ceiling, thoroughly wash, rinse and sand the ceiling before priming.

Step 2 – smooth the ceiling: Using a sanding sponge, work in a circular motion and smooth out the surface of the ceiling.

Step 3 – cut away loose paper: Use a utility knife to cut away any loose paper from the ceiling. Scrape off the rest with a putty knife.

Step 4 – Secure the plaster and apply compound: Fasten as many screws as needed to the ceiling to secure the plaster to the lath. Use a drywall compound and putty knife to spread a thick layer of mud over the screws. Once it is dry, add another coat. Sand down any excess drywall compound and then prime.

Gypsum is easy to cut with a utility knife or hacksaw. A mitre saw produces the most accurate angles if you have access to one. Alternatively, a backsaw can be used together with a mitre-cutting block. Cut the cornices carefully, as the gypsum tends to crumble. The raw surface should first be painted with a primer and then painted over with two or three layers of PVA ceiling paint.

Polystyrene

This corning is made from expanded polystyrene and because it is lightweight, it is quick and easy to install making this type increasingly popular. Polystyrene cornices can be glued into position using foam-friendly glue – the incorrect glue will eat into the polystyrene. Acrylic sealants are ideal but, double check the application guidelines on the instructions. Use a sharp utility knife to cut through the polystyrene or to make mitre joints for the corners. The corning can be painted over with PVA water-based paint, like gypsum. "New large polystyrene cornice profiles fit over the old 75mm gypsum corning, so the process is fairly easy and not too messy," says Richard.



Polyurethane cornices are available in a variety of colours and designs



A jointless ceiling with no visible cornices gives a clean look

How to repaint your ceiling

Follow these steps to give your ceiling a new lease on life with a fresh coat of paint:

Step 1: Use a paint scraper to remove any peeling paint, then sand it gently to achieve a smooth surface.

Step 2: Brush and wash down the ceiling to clean it. Remove any mould by scrubbing the ceiling with bleach. Rinse and allow to dry thoroughly.

Step 3: Check the ceiling for cracks and fill with an acrylic sealant especially made for ceilings. Also fill gaps between the cornice and the ceiling with an acrylic sealant.

Step 4: Prime the ceiling with a universal primer.

Step 5: Apply a ceiling paint of your choice using a roller following the manufacturer's instructions for the number of coats needed and drying time.

Polyurethane

These cornices are available in a range of colours and designs. The advantage of this type of cornice is that polyurethane is flexible and can withstand bending and twisting. It is glued into position and a sharp utility knife can be used to cut through the cornice. Polyurethane need not be painted and has a glossy appearance that is easy to clean with warm, soapy water.

Aluminium shadowline trim

This creates the illusion of a floating ceiling with no visible cornices. It is used to create the impression of greater height and space in smaller homes.



▲ Aluminium cornice



The addition of timber and new light fittings can revive an old ceiling

Do it right... the first time

Acryl-W



Use to attach cornices to interior walls, as well as fill cracks and joints. This plastic elastic sealant is ideal to use where a moderate amount of movement occurs.

It has a good adhesion to many materials and can be painted. Available in white, grey and beech.

High Tack



Instant tack of weights of up to 20kg

Perfect for permanently gluing down panels, splash backs and skirting boards, windowsills, natural stone, and thresholds. No need to drill into tiles or concrete for bathroom and kitchen fixtures - simply stick them on the walls with High Tack - the original, best quality instant tack adhesive.

Hybriflex-540



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This specific sealant is ideal for joints between structures and window and door frames. It has excellent adhesion to most materials and is highly resistant to ageing and weathering - so it can be used inside and outside. Available in white, grey and beige.



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Bulkheads, with the addition of strip lighting, create aesthetically pleasing effects

Quick upgrade

Ceilings can be upgraded without replacing the ceiling boards.

Try these ideas:

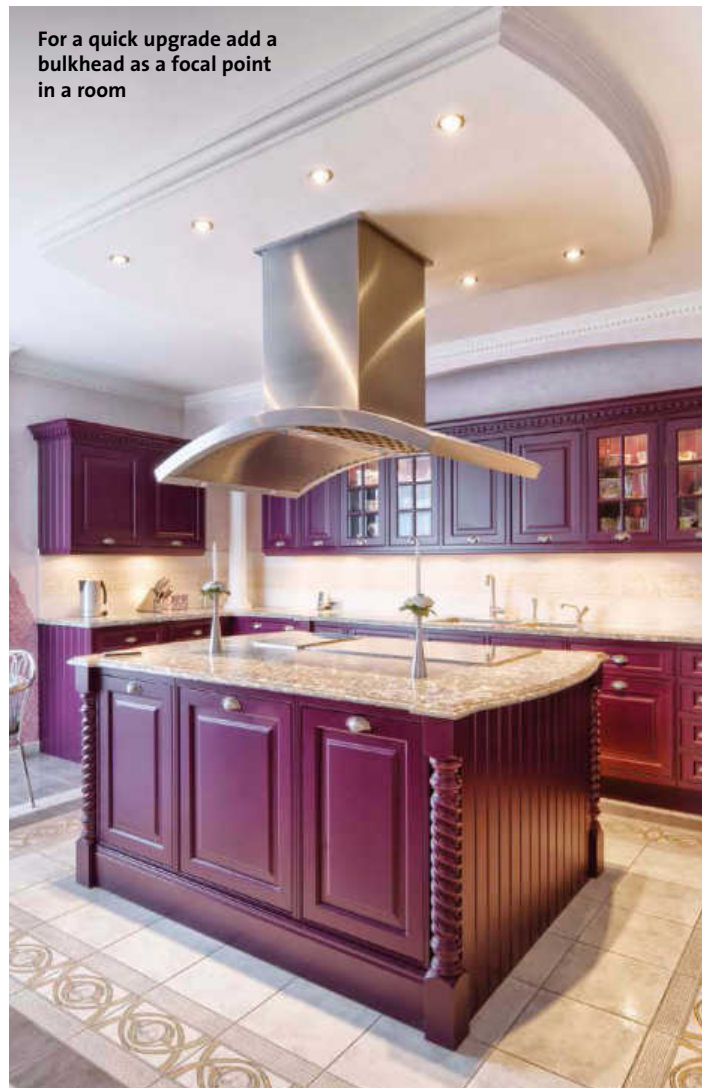
- Repaint the ceiling.
- Replace the existing cornicing with bigger, more stylish polystyrene cornicing.
- Upgrade a cover strip ceiling by removing the cover strips and skimming the surface of the ceiling.
- Construct a bulkhead over a dining room table or bed or passage and add in recessed lighting.
- Add wallpaper to a room's ceiling.
- Fix moulded polystyrene tiles to the ceiling.

Bulkheads

Bulkheads are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also enable the addition of fancy lighting, and conceal wiring and air conditioning equipment. These are ideal in entrance halls, where visitors will notice the unique profiles and special effects.

A frame for a bulkhead can be made from standard brandering. These can be rounded, half circle or straight, depending on the positioning of the bulkhead. The addition of downlighters or strip lighting helps to accentuate the piece.

The frame can be secured over an existing ceiling, so long as the anchoring points or brandering above are able to support the additional weight. The ceiling boards are attached to the frame and painted afterwards. Newer ceiling board options are often lighter and therefore a better option for bulkheads. ✂



For a quick upgrade add a bulkhead as a focal point in a room



A mod wallpapered ceiling

Create a new look by fixing modern wallpaper or moulded polystyrene tiles to the ceiling



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All about plastering walls

Why plaster falls off walls and how to prevent it from happening again

By Aarifah Nosarka

Plaster or replaster a wall

Independent building contractor Sharl Bennie offers some advice on how to achieve a blemish-free plaster finish. "If you intend doing a lot of plastering, a one-day course should teach you the basics, enabling you to hone your skills at home. Plastering combines knowledge, technique and practice. Not knowing fully what is involved could leave you with wasted building material." Sharl says that a lot can be learnt from a professional plasterer, if only to observe the process of applying plaster to a wall before attempting to do it yourself.



Plastering tools

Tap against your plastered wall... does it emit a hollow sound? If your answer is 'yes', this is a sign that the plaster may be debonding from the wall.

There are a number of reasons why plaster debonds. These include the initial mix ratios, cement type, application technique, curing regime and inadequate substrate preparation.

If the size of the area debonding is larger than a side plate, the plaster needs to be removed and replaced.

- Plastering float – used to apply plaster and smooth out the surface.
- Plasterer's hand hawk – allows easy access to small amounts of plaster at a time.
- Trowel – used to spread, smooth and move the plaster.
- Builder's level.
- Block brush.

It is important to keep all plastering tools clean and dry to avoid rust and unwanted material in the plaster.





When replastering a wall, the old plaster must first be removed

When replastering a wall, the old plaster must be removed. To do this, make a hole in the wall and work from the hole, removing pieces of the old plaster with a mortar chisel and mallet. Use a chisel to chip away old plaster a few centimetres from the edges.

The plastering process

Before you begin plastering or replastering, cover your floors with heavy plastic sheets loosely taped together.

Step 1: Plaster adheres best to a damp wall, so dampen the wall using a wet brush or water spray (this gives the plaster time to form a bonding reaction before it dries).

Step 2: Use a hand hawk and flat metal plaster trowel to apply plaster to the wall. "A flick of the wrist followed by a swing of the hand hawk flings plaster onto the wall." According to Sharl, the wrist flick and swing can be learnt by observing an experienced plasterer.

Step 3: Fill a large section of the wall with blobs of plaster. Wait for the plaster to stiffen out a bit and attach itself to the wall.

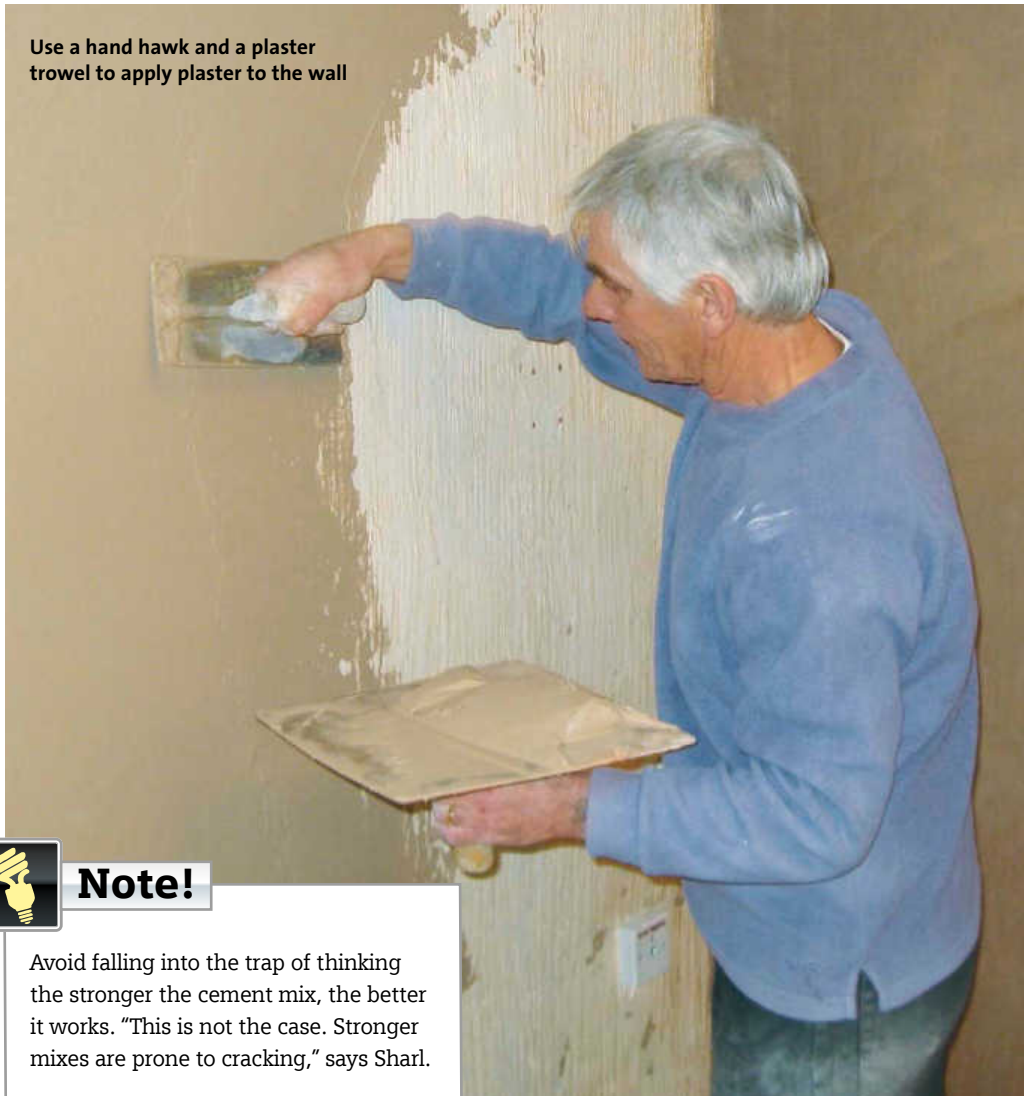
Step 4: When the plaster has dried a bit, use a straight edge and a short pumping and sweeping motion to level the plaster. "This is done using a level at one metre intervals followed by the use of the straight edge to flatten out the areas in-between."

Step 5: At this stage, the wall should be levelled. If there are hollow areas, fill where

Dos and don'ts

- Avoid tackling an area too large to handle. Work on smaller areas.
- Avoid leaving an incomplete plastered wall overnight without scraping and levelling.
- Avoid leaving the building mix overnight to be used the next day. Plan your mix carefully so that you use up the mix for the day and start afresh with a new mix the next morning.
- If the wall finish is not up to standard the following day, smooth it out using skim coat, finishing plaster or RhinoGlide. Apply thinly over a dry plastered wall, before or after a coat of primer is applied. An alternative is applying RhinoLite over the plastered wall, which gives a smooth, classy wall finish. However, this is not for the faint-hearted and should be done by an experienced applicator for it to look really good. "Improper application of RhinoLite is difficult to paint over because the fats will have been left on the wall and paint does not readily adhere to fat."

Use a hand hawk and a plaster trowel to apply plaster to the wall



Note!

Avoid falling into the trap of thinking the stronger the cement mix, the better it works. "This is not the case. Stronger mixes are prone to cracking," says Sharl.

necessary, not forgetting to flatten with the steel trowel and straight edge.

Step 6: Wet the wall using a wood float, block brush and water. Float it smooth with the wooden trowel using a large circular motion. Repeat this process twice. Fill hollow areas and continue wetting and floating, working your way across the wall.

Plaster sand that falls to the ground should not be reused. A sandy-looking patch left on the wall after it has cured normally happens when an old 'dead' mix was collected from the floor and reused. A mix that stands for longer than two hours and then reused will result in a weakened plastered wall. Sharl says a wall can look good for some time before signs of an inadequately plastered wall are noticed.

Two common reasons for plaster not sticking to the wall properly are:

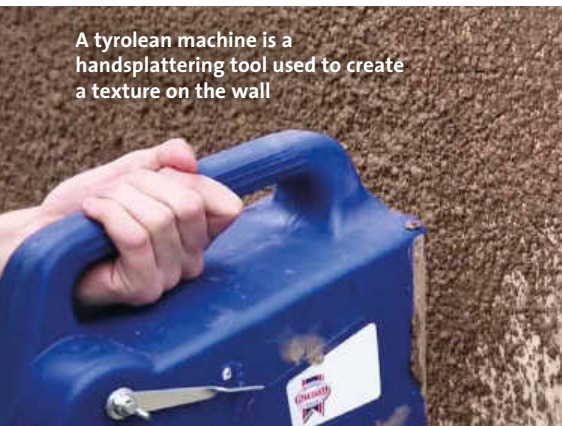
- Plastering a dry wall.
- Applying an expired (old) plaster mix.

Improving bond strength

To achieve the best possible bond between plaster and wall, clean dusty or oily walls thoroughly, allow the wall to reach the correct moisture content, use bonding liquids when necessary, and follow the procedure recommended by the manufacturer.

Improve the bond by painting brickwork with a mixture of pure cement and bonding liquid.

A tyrolean machine is a handsplattering tool used to create a texture on the wall



"This helps with plaster adhesion, but there is a trick to this... Use the mix to paint sections of the wall you are plastering with a block brush. You can add a little bonding liquid to the plaster mix as well, not only will this help the bond, it will make the plaster more plastic and therefore more water resistant. However, unless you have experience working with the plasticised mix, it can be difficult to work with because it shortens drying time and requires a quicker work method," says Sharl.

Different textured finishes

There are a number of ways to create a plastered wall texture.



A textured finish can be created by brushing cement paste onto the wall with a block brush

Plastering tips

- Make sure the plaster is mixed properly. Read and adhere to the instructions on the cement bag.
- Avoid mixing more plaster than you can use over a one- to two-hour period. Plaster left for over after two hours is considered dead. It cannot be revived by the addition of cement or water. It has to be thrown away or used for backfill.
- Quantities on the bag are usually specified in kilograms. One litre of water weighs one kilogram. This makes it easy to work out the ratio.

- Scratch plaster effects can be created by adding a bit of river sand into the plaster mix. For deeper scratches, add some small stones to the mix.
- Some textured finishes are created when the plaster has cured. These are normally done by flicking a strong cement paste onto the wall and pressing it flat with the steel trowel to give it a cloud effect. They can also be made by brushing the cement paste onto the wall using a block brush.
- Another texture involves using a tyrolean machine. This is a hand-held splattering tool that flicks a cement paste onto the wall. There are no concrete rules about the mixture of the paste. It is merely a mixture of sand, cement and water. The speed the handle is turned and the motion used to move the machine along determines the final outcome of the texture.

According to Sharl, using the tyrolean machine is about getting creative and having fun with textures.

- Many textures can be created with paint or textured coatings applied when the plaster is fully cured. Some of these textured coatings are plastered on, while others are brushed onto the wall. Paints can be thickened using fillers or ripple coat paints. These are applied with a sponge roller. There are fine and coarse rollers that give different results even when the same paint is used. The result depends on how much paint is applied to the roller and the speed at which the roller is moved across the wall. Plaster takes up to 14 days to fully cure before any textured coating or tiling can be applied. If you want to paint a wall that has been plastered, wait for seven days. Cement washing can be done after a day of curing. ✖



For more information

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Give old window frames new life

Window frames have to withstand environmental conditions such as rain, wind and exposure to ultraviolet light, which eventually take their toll

By Aarifah Nosarka



Cast iron, wrought iron and mild steel window frames have been around for centuries and are common in many South African homes. In newer homes, cast metal frames have made way for PVC and aluminium, which require very little maintenance. Timber window frames are also popular because they are timeless, add character to a home's architecture and are considered more environmentally friendly. If properly taken care of, wooden and steel frames will last as long as the building to which they are fitted.

Signs that a frame should be restored

Timber

When the level of sheen starts to fade, edges show wear and there are indications of water exposure to raw timber, a revamp is needed.

Steel

Rust is an indication that a frame needs to be restored. It can cause glass to crack and masonry to crumble at the fixing points.

How to restore wooden window frames

Step 1: Gently remove the old putty using a hammer and wood chisel. Be careful not to damage or break the glass.

Step 2: Clear out the debris and clean the working area thoroughly. Remove any rotten areas.

Step 3: Clean the area and treat affected spots with wood filler, which acts as an adhesive and filler.

Step 4: Once the filler has dried, sand the area, apply a finishing layer of filler, allow it to dry then sand smooth.

Step 5: Apply your choice of finish to the window frame.



Gently remove old putty using a hammer and wood chisel



Note

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for painting putty. Some putty can be painted right away, while others require a couple weeks before painting.

Restoring steel frames

Step 1: Gently remove the old putty using a hammer and wood chisel. Be careful not to damage or break the glass.

Step 2: Scrape down the paint with a scraper and remove layered paint using paint stripper.

Step 3: Sand the surface until smooth and wipe away the sanding dust with a damp cloth.

Step 4: Treat rusted areas with a rust treatment product or rust converter, and prime the metal surface with metal primer.

Step 5: Glaze with putty designed for use on metal sashes. Knead the putty in your hands to make it soft and pliable. Be careful when pressing the putty in around the edges.

Step 6: Apply a topcoat using a good quality exterior paint. Allow it to dry for a naturally good seal.

Three main sealing finishes for wood

Varnish

When varnish is exposed to the sun, it becomes brittle and hard over time. This prevents the varnish from moving with



Glaze with putty designed for use on metal sashes.



Tip

With new steel, apply a rust resistant undercoat. For best results, a universal undercoat is recommended as a second coat. The finishing coat or final colour can be applied in 2-3 thinner coats.

Tips for working with putty

- Do not prepare more putty than you can use.
- Place unused putty back in the liner and fold to seal.
- For optimum performance, ensure that unused putty is not kept for more than 40 minutes.
- Add linseed oil for better workability.
- Mineral turpentine can also be used to help smooth the putty.

the substrate, causing the coating to tear and crack. Eventually, this leads to water entering behind the skin, which results in peeling and flaking.

Cobus Lourens from Swartland says removing and recoating wood that has been sealed can be hard work. However, you do not have to sand the entire window. Close the window to see which parts are exposed. Sand down the exposed areas. Sometimes normal sanding does not remove all the varnish. Use sugar soap or paint stripper to remove varnish in tough spots. When the varnish is removed, wash off the residue with water and allow the wood to dry before recoating. Internal surfaces only need to be roughened slightly with sandpaper in order to give the new coating something to grab onto.



Timber window frames are timeless and add character to a home's architecture

Pic courtesy Swartland

Varnish versus sealants

Woodoc's Frikkie Greeff explains the differences between an ordinary varnish and sealers:

- Varnish is a pure surface coating. Little or no penetration of the product takes place into the wood. Dilution does not help as the diluent will penetrate, but the resin will remain on the surface. This is why a varnish peels off wood once deterioration starts.
- A sealer is a formulation of resins and oils or waxes that penetrates into the wood on first application. If the first coat is applied as per instructions, the wood is saturated and the second and subsequent coats build up on the surface. As the second and third coats bind with the first coat, which is part of the wood, no peeling or flaking will occur and therefore no deep sanding is required when applying maintenance coats in the years to come.

Sealers

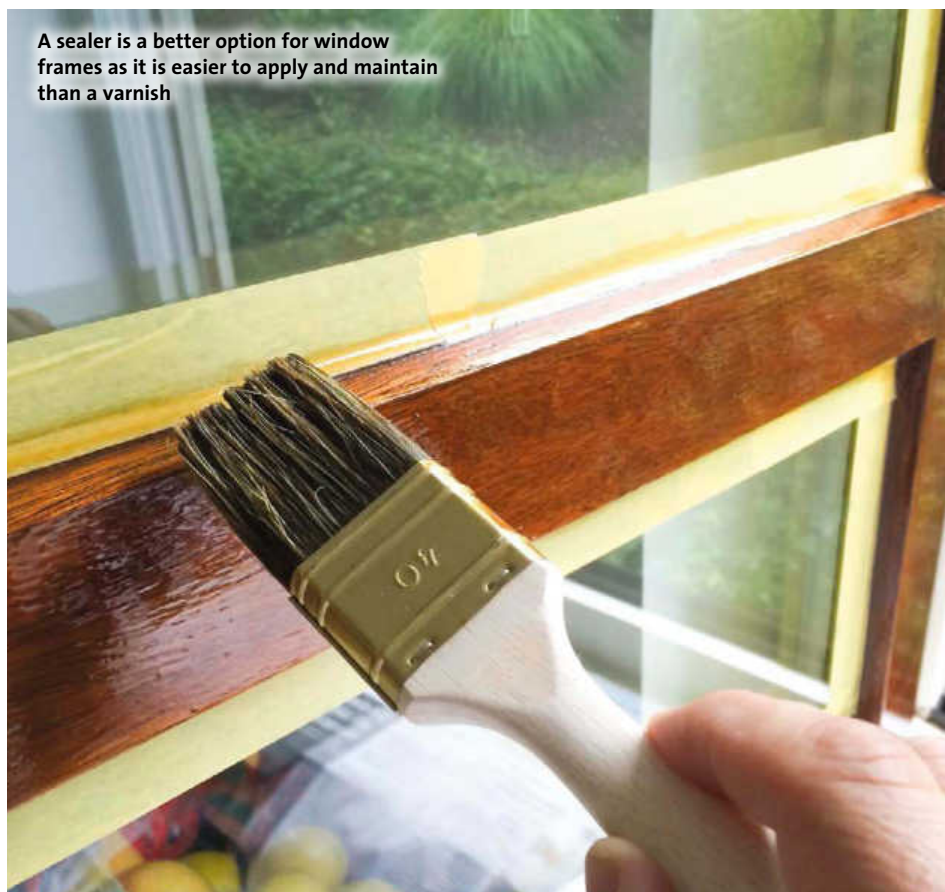
According to Cobus, sealants are a better option for sealing frames. They are easier to apply and maintain. They are durable, with a lifespan ranging from one to five years on exposed surfaces. Cobus says that once the coating has dried out, sand the timber and wipe it down with a cloth that has been soaked in mineral turpentine. Allow the surface to dry before recoating with a fresh sealer.

Oil

This is an old method of sealing and has a short lifespan. Cobus says that if the oil finish is not thinned down, build-up will occur, which makes the surface tacky. To remove and recoat, scrape off the tacky bits and wash with mineral turpentine. Let it dry before resealing with another product.

Cobus recommends using water-based coatings to seal wood. "They are the easiest to apply and maintain, and boast a wide range of other benefits like quick drying times and easy clean-up."

A sealer is a better option for window frames as it is easier to apply and maintain than a varnish



Frikkie says that a tinted sealer will always outlast a clear one as the transparent iron oxides in the pigment will give extra UV protection. ✂

Sources: www.swartland.co.za,
www.woodoc.com

A joint sealant can be used to seal gaps in window frames



Wooden window frames require regular maintenance to retain their beauty

Pic courtesy Swartland



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General tips

- Depending on the product used, applying more thin coats is better than fewer thick coats.
- Leave sufficient drying or curing times between coats. Drying time with solvent-based coatings should be no less than a day.
- Lubricate moving parts such as rollers, locks and hinges with a silicone-based spray before applying a sealant.
- Do not paint in direct sunlight, very cold or humid conditions.

Paint for wood

Revive dull wooden pieces with specialist wood paint and brush and roller techniques

By Aarifah Nosarka

Some people view the painting of wood as sacrilege, but badly damaged or outdated wooden pieces can be given a second lease on life without spending hours on sanding and repair.

There is a growing trend to revamp and refinish old furniture to create a modern, fresh look. Bold, bright colours on timber have taken a backseat as more calming, delicate hues remain trendy in many homes.

Greg Williams, CEO at Paintcor, says the latest paint trend is to apply water-based products to wood, although solvent-based products remain the most cost-effective.

There is a growing trend to revamp old furniture to create a modern look



Water-based paints may appeal to consumers because the brushes are easier to clean and have a lower odour. A bucket of soapy water will clean a brush with ease.

Technical service consultant at Prominent Paints Herman Rabe says a smart move is selecting a versatile paint that can be used on many surfaces. "White (water-based) primers are suitable for application on almost all surfaces. The disadvantage of solvent-based paints is that they require a longer drying time, thereby delaying the application of the topcoat."

Calming, delicate hues remain trendy in many homes

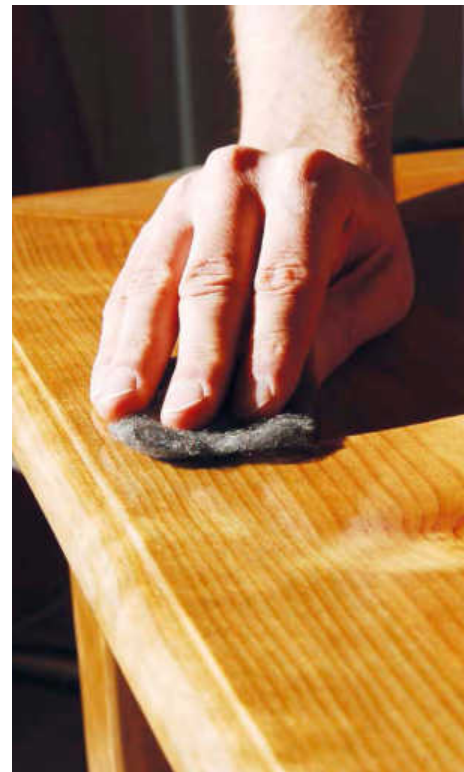


Tip

When preparing the surface, always sand in the same direction as the grain in the wood.

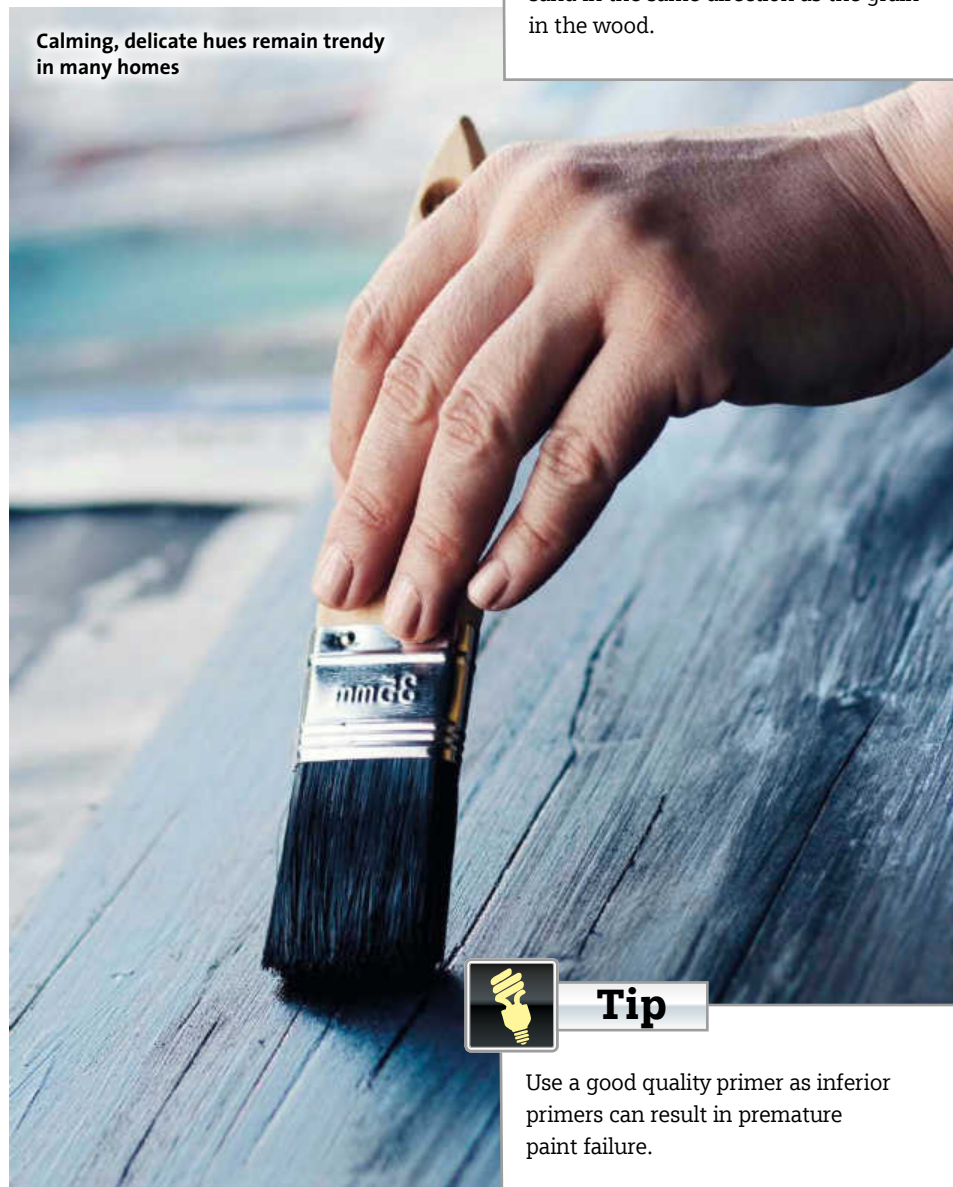
Surface preparation

Prepping your piece of furniture properly before painting will give you the best chance of an end product you adore. Follow these steps to prepare wooden furniture for paint:



If the wood was once waxed, strip the wax using fine steel wool cloth and mineral turpentine

- Sand the surface with a fairly coarse grit sandpaper or an orbital sander with variable speeds to rough it up a little so the primer has something to adhere to. Be careful not to gouge or strip the surface.
- If the furniture piece was once waxed, strip the piece of its wax finish using fine steel wool dipped in mineral turpentine and a dry rag. This also removes oil-based dirt. If not stripped, the wax will prevent the new paint from bonding with the surface, which will result in it peeling.
- Finish by removing all remaining residue with a tack cloth and mineral turpentine.



Tip

Use a good quality primer as inferior primers can result in premature paint failure.



This distressed look was created using the Vaseline technique

Pic courtesy O'Grady's



Tip

Water-based pure acrylic products are better for use on wooden pieces exposed to UV rays than solvent-based products.

How to prevent roller marks, brush streaks and hide imperfections

- Ensure that all your material and equipment are at hand before you start painting.
- Use a sponge roller or mohair roller to apply primer.
- Remove any doors and hinges from the piece to avoid getting paint on these. Replace old handles and hinges with new ones for a more effective overhaul.
- Fill blemishes with wood filler and let it dry. Sand the filled areas flat and remove any dust with a tack cloth.
- Apply an appropriate primer and allow the surface to dry for eight hours before applying a second coat.
- Once the surface is dry – after the obligatory eight hours drying time or

specified time on the manufacturer's label – use a sanding block with 100-grit sandpaper and sand the primed surface to remove the stipples created by the roller.

- Wipe down with a damp rag and remove the dust from the surface – do a second coat, let it dry and apply the topcoat.

Painting exterior wooden furniture

When painting wood that is exposed to the elements, it is important to seal all areas where water can get in. The use of a high quality, solvent-based universal undercoat or pink wood primer is recommended and will help seal all exposed areas. This should be followed by a solvent- or water-based topcoat.

Decorative paint techniques and challenges

Sofia da Cunha, from O'Grady's Paint says using chalk paint does not require the use of a primer. It is, however, necessary to thoroughly clean the object that you are going to paint using a cloth and sugar soap water. Wipe it clean using a wet cloth and let it dry completely before painting.

A common challenge people face is bleed through on wood. Bleed through is the term used when the original stain on furniture shows through the paint. You will notice an orangey-brown or pinkish colour no matter how many times you paint over it. This often happens when painting over older furniture pieces or unfinished wood containing lots of tannin, which is often in the form of knots in wood with existing mildew or watermarks.

Solution

Clear shellac, often found in cans, can be applied conveniently over the affected area.



Paint can bring outdated furniture to life

This should also help with water marks on wooden pieces.

The difference between chalk paint and milk paint

Sofia says that chalk craft paint and milk paint are perfect for decorative finishes on wood. Although both result in a similar finish, they are two different products.

Milk paint

This comes in a powder form and needs to be mixed with water. It should be stirred frequently. Different batches may not match equally with others. A milk paint finish typically results in a chipped look. This type of paint is made of pigment, lime, clay and milk protein.

Chalk craft paint

This type comes premixed in cans and does not require mixing. It can be found in a variety of colours and will not result in a chipped look unless intentionally done that way. It is used to produce a matte finish that can be used on many surfaces. Chalk craft paint needs little to no sanding on previously painted surfaces, nor does it necessitate the use of a primer.



Tip

Apply additional coats for more lustre.



Pic courtesy O'Grady's

This look is known as two colour distressing

Sofia says both paints are environmentally friendly, easy to use, have chalky undertones, do not need sanding, have a quick drying time and can be used indoors and outdoors.

Trendy paint techniques

Sofia recommends the application of liquid wax to seal the wooden item after paint. "This protects it from all type of marks and stains," she says.

Two colour distressing

Apply your first coat of paint, preferably a light colour. When it is dry, apply a second coat of a darker colour and let that dry. Sand down the painted surface with 220-grit sandpaper and the bottom colour will start to show. Once you are pleased with the look, wipe the object down and seal with liquid wax.



Pic courtesy O'Grady's

Achieve modern polished look using chalk paint



Pic courtesy hueologycompany.com

The wood grain will remain visible when using a wash technique



A distressed look is created by sanding away the top paint in certain areas

Wash

Dip your brush in water before loading your brush with chalk paint – this dilutes the paint. You may now start painting the surface – make sure the wood grain is still visible. If you can't see the wood grain, there is too much paint and you need more water on the brush. Wipe off excess paint with a wet cloth immediately. When you are done, seal the paint with liquid wax.

Distressing with Vaseline

For a chipped look, apply Vaseline petroleum jelly with your fingers onto the areas where you want the paint to come off later. The chalk paint won't adhere to the areas where you applied the Vaseline. Paint with your desired colour. When the paint is dry, remove the Vaseline using a paint scraper to reveal the paint beneath. Don't forget to seal the paint.

Polished look

Add a small amount of water to the chalk paint to thin it out. Apply two coats on your object. Seal the paint after it has dried. ✖

Sources: www.prominentpaints.co.za, www.paintcor.co.za, www.ogrady.co.za

Project guide

Difficulty: Beginner



Estimated cost: R100



Estimated time: One day

I help Shelagh Page restore an imbuia circular tripod side table, often referred to as a high-style table or candle stand side table

Restored to glory

By Gareth Greathead

**Tools & materials**

- 120-grit sandpaper
- Junior hacksaw
- Epoxy adhesive
- White wood glue
- Router table
- Round over bit
- Leadwood: 300 x 25 x 25mm
- Sanding sealer

Antique furniture is valued for its age, beauty, rarity, condition, utility and symbolic or sentimental value. This leaves the labelling of an antique to the eye of the beholder. Mass production of commercial items began during the Industrial Revolution, and identification of an antique should include consideration of craftsmanship or specific design detail. It is generally accepted that an antique should be more than 100 years old and be in original condition.

You would have noticed that the woodworking theme for this month is furniture restoration and upcycling. I thought it necessary to try my hand at 'antique' furniture restoration and started looking for a piece to restore. My colleague, Shelagh Page, hinted that she had a circular tripod side table at home that needed repair. The table belonged to her mother before being passed along to her. She explained that one of the legs that formed tripod had broken away and there were a few pieces of wood missing from the rim that surrounds the tabletop.

When I arrived at Shelagh's house, she showed me the table, which bore little resemblance to what was described and was not what I would call an antique, but rather a piece from the 1950s. Naturally this proves that the sentimental value people place on items does affect its labelling as an antique. I told Shelagh it was unlikely that we could restore the piece to its original glory and suggested painting the table after repairing it. While Shelagh didn't object, she jokingly said that her mother would turn over in her grave – naturally this was something I wanted to avoid. The piece was made from more than one wood, but was mostly imbuia.

The assessment

Before starting, it was necessary to do my own assessment of the damage, which was quite severe. The first thing I noticed was the missing leg and, as Shelagh said, there were pieces missing from the surrounding lip on the tabletop, which had also separated from the pedestal underneath.



1 The side table was in pieces and had to be repaired before continuing with the restoration



2 Epoxy was used to glue the leg back onto the pedestal

It was apparent that several attempts at repair had been made in the past and one of these was nailing the tabletop to the pedestal beneath, leaving holes in the top. I also noticed the dull appearance of the wood. Apparently, older furniture was mostly finished with oil and this required occasional recoating in order to provide effective protection. After the assessment, it was clear that the restoration would not be perfect, but at least I could make an attempt. If it all went awry the table could be painted at a later stage.

Step 1: The first thing I did was reattach the leg that had broken off. Unfortunately, when the leg broke off, it took some of the surrounding joint with it. I tried to put these pieces back in place, but they didn't fit and I decided to glue on the leg with epoxy before trying to fit them again. I used epoxy because of its gap filling properties, and once this had dried, there was no chance of fitting the broken pieces back in place. If I could do it again, I would have spent a bit more time trying to reposition the missing wood. This meant that I had to use wood filler to fill the gaps. As I wanted to get as close a match as possible, I used Den Braven WoodFlex Hard (Imbuia).

Step 2: I gave the legs and turned components a light sand with 120-grit sandpaper and began to experiment with possible finishing products. I have some Rustins Finishing Oil, which has provided good results in the past, and decided to give that a try first. As soon as it was applied, it sank into the wood making it almost black and removed all character by hiding the grain pattern. After another light sand, I applied a first coat of sanding sealer and achieved a more satisfactory result.



3 Flexible wood filler was used to fill the gaps where wood was missing



Tips!

It helps to thin your sanding sealer approximately 30% with lacquer thinners. Thinned sanding sealer goes on smoother and dries faster than it would straight from the can.

Step 3: At this stage my attention shifted to the tabletop and replacing the missing pieces of imbuia in-between the lip surrounding the tabletop. The broken off pieces were missing and using filler would certainly ruin any chance of restoring the piece to near original. I have never worked with imbuia and it seems that it is no longer widely available due to over exploitation. I had some 300mm x 25mm x 25mm pieces of leadwood (another rare wood) left over from a past project, and hesitantly decided to use them. After looking through the available router bits, I found a round over bit that loosely matched the profile of the cove. The bit was fitted to a router table and the leadwood was routed on one side.

Step 4: I cut the jagged edges away from the lip and placed the leadwood over the gaps to gauge the angle and length required. After this was marked with a pencil, I used my junior hacksaw to cut the wood. The goal was to get the pieces to wedge into the gap as tightly as possible. I didn't get the angles 100% correct and there were a few small gaps that had to be filled after the leadwood was glued to the outside edge of the tabletop with Alcolin



4 A hacksaw was used to cut away the ragged edges from the lip



5 A closely matching colour of wood was found and routed to approximate the cove on the lip



7 The leadwood inserts were glued to the surface of the tabletop



8 Some gaps remained on either side of the inserts



6 A length of leadwood was placed on top of the lip to gauge the angle and lengths required

Professional Wood Glue. To avoid having to use too much filler, I trimmed some of the imbuia that was removed earlier and wedged this into the larger gaps.

Step 5: All the wedges in-between the gaps left on either side of the wood inserts were trimmed away. After that the excess filler on the leg joint was trimmed away where necessary and sanded to match the existing profiles.

Step 6: I didn't attempt to fill the holes left in the tabletop from an earlier repair because I knew that getting a perfect colour match would be impossible.

Step 7: After the excess filler was removed and the replacement pieces were sanded to match the corresponding cove, I applied more coats of sanding sealer. Each coat was followed by smoothing with the 120-grit sandpaper. I must have applied four to five coats before I was happy with the finish.



9 Gaps in-between the inserts were filled with wood shims and wood filler



10 The inserts were sanded by hand in an attempt to match the existing cove more accurately



Tip!

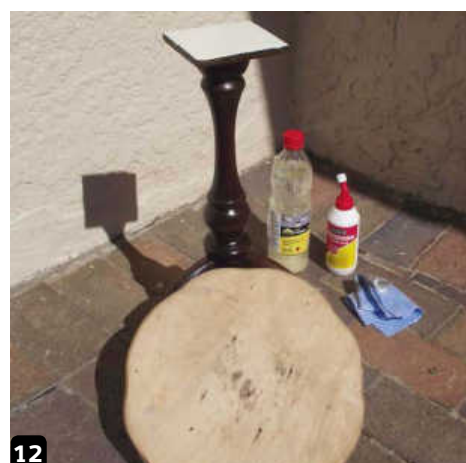
Apply coats of thinned sanding sealer as quickly as possible to avoid it becoming tacky and ruining your finish.

Step 8: With the pedestal and tabletop repaired it was time to reattach the top to the pedestal. I started by flattening the top of the pedestal and bottom of the top with 100-grit sandpaper before smoothing them off with 120-grit. Unlike many other glues white wood glue does not require a roughened surface to work effectively, and the tighter the fit, the better. After initial preparation it is important to ensure the surfaces being glued are free from oil, dust or dirt. I prefer to use acetone to wipe down the areas before the application of glue because it is one of the more aggressive industrial cleaners and leaves absolutely no residue. However, if acetone is not available, mineral turpentine will work just as well. ✂



11

Approximately five coats of sanding sealer were applied with additional sanding in-between



12

The tabletop was attached to the pedestal before the final coat of sanding sealer was applied



Restoration brothers

By Gareth Greathead

Brothers Gregory and Christopher Lambrechts are passionate about restoring historical pieces to their former glory

Owners of Leighton-Morris Furniture Restoration, Gregory and Christopher have a combined experience in excess of 50 years doing antique furniture restoration and have learnt from some of the best. Greg and Chris attended St Vincent School for the Deaf. The school believes that being deaf is not a disability, but rather an alternate ability, and the subjects taught at the school were tailored around the development of these special talents.

Simon Leighton-Morris, founder of Leighton-Morris Antique Restoration, previously based in Wynberg, Sandton, approached the school with an offer to sponsor specialist furniture restoration training and mentorship to interested students. This included transportation to and from the school three times a week. Four students took up the offer and were taught practical skills and techniques used in furniture restoration. Peter Baxter and Dave Morgan, employees at the shop in Wynberg, were put in charge of training the students. Dave later relocated to the UK and became a lecturer on woodworking

and furniture restoration at the University of London.

After completing his schooling, Greg was offered a permanent position and chose to stay. Chris did the same after completing school a few years later. "It wasn't really

about the money we made, but our love for the job and the love, respect and knowledge shared by Simon and our trainers that made us stay. At the same time, we cannot say that we went without; we were given all we needed including a bakkie to get us around."

Hard work pays off

Simon was eventually ready for retirement but didn't want to bring an end to the business in which he had so much pride. He was recorded saying, "I believe these men are the best in the world at what they do and I would like them to continue providing people with a professional service unlike any other."

This resulted in the brothers' acquisition of a fully stocked going concern along with all the bits and pieces used in furniture restoration. This included rare veneers money cannot buy as well as many fittings not manufactured anymore, like brass casters and much more. "The only thing Simon took from the workshop was one workbench to continue his woodworking while retired."



An antique writing table that was restored

The brothers moved the business to Midrand but kept the business name Leighton-Morris Antique Restoration. "The discipline Simon taught has helped us run our own business. We didn't realise it at the time, but the discipline we learnt was all part of Simon's master plan. After we wake in the morning, we clean up and meet in the kitchen at 7am sharp, we have our hot drinks, eat breakfast and make lunch. We are in the shop by 8am, tea time is at 10am and by 4pm it's all tools down."

Ownership of the business has also helped to develop their confidence. While working with Simon they used a translator to help them communicate with clients and another employee handled delivery. "Since taking over the business we have learnt to

Caring for your antiques

- Avoid applying too much wax.
- After the wood has been treated, all that is required is the regular wiping away of dust with a microfibre cloth.
- Furniture can be easily damaged with exposure to UV rays. Keep valuable furniture away from windows or doors or anywhere a large amount of light enters.



Greg and Chris lovingly restore old pieces of furniture to their former glory

communicate with our clients directly and we believe this helps us provide a better service. Also, when something has been lovingly restored, it is difficult to load the piece onto a bakkie in the hope that it gets to its destination without being damaged. Since we now do our own deliveries, people are able to see the dedication we have for furniture restoration."

The process

Greg and Chris say the most challenging thing about their job is that the 'commercial' value of items doesn't always correlate with the sentimental value people place on it. "It's difficult to tell someone that their late mother's or gran's bedside table is actually not worth a lot and the

cost, as well as the work involved to repair it, cannot be justified."

The process starts with the client bringing in the item and describing what they want done. "Quite regularly the client is not fully aware of the work that needs to be done and this requires us to do our own assessment before we can issue a quote. One of the problems we encounter is that the extent of work that needs to be done only becomes apparent once the piece has been disassembled."

After receiving approval to go ahead, the brothers come together and discuss how to tackle the job. Naturally, the brothers are very close and while they sometimes disagree, they respect one another's opinion. Greg is more artistic while Chris is blessed with the ability to figure out issues of a technical nature. "This is not to say that one dismisses the other – it's always a discussion."

"The development of technology and power tools over the years has changed the way we work to some degree but we still rely heavily on hand tools. In order to achieve a true-to-time period finish, the use of hand tools is necessary, and often this involves the use of hand chisels to replicate intricate scroll-type designs. At the same time, we are able to save a lot of time by using electric sanders and other power tools." ✂



Greg and Chris still rely heavily on hand tools

BRIGHT IDEAS

Readers share their time-saving, space-saving or innovative ideas

Stabilise your umbrella

We have a crank-up umbrella next to our swimming pool and on numerous occasions I have had to recover it from the pool after a gust of wind. Concrete blocks are available to place on the base but, have to be repositioned every time the umbrella is moved.

I made a plan with a piece of scrap lintel that I had and it works extremely well. Cut the lintel to the required lengths with a masonry disc fitted to an angle grinder. Drill suitably spaced mounting holes in the metal frame with a 7mm drill bit. Place the cut lintels under the umbrella legs and drill through the lintels with a 6mm masonry drill bit using the pre-drilled holes in the metal frame as guides.

Purchase a length of 6mm threaded rod, suitable washers and nuts to fit. I found it easier to assemble all washers and nuts on the full length rod on each hole before cutting the rod to size. Use a file or replace the masonry disc on the angle grinder with a grinder disc to smooth off any sharp edges on the threaded rod to prevent small children from injuring themselves if they play around the umbrella base.

The umbrella is still light enough to drag around the pool to a new position, but I no longer have any problems with it falling over.

Paul Straub, Lynwood Ridge



Congratulations to Joel van Staden who wins a FME630K Stanley Fatmax 2mm Planer



Shave time off your clean-up

I do a lot of DIY projects at home and when I drill into wood all the shavings and wood chips fly over a wide area, making a huge mess. There is always a lot of cleaning to do afterwards, so I found a solution to my problem and it works 100%.

I cut away the bottom away of a 1kg margarine container. I place this container over the area to be drilled and position the drill inside the container. Then there is only a very small area to clean as all the shavings and chips are contained in the container. I use the method with my pedestal drill as well as my hand drill and believe it will prove to be particularly useful for kitchen contractors.

Joel van Staden, Brits

WINNING LETTER

WIN!

Share your ideas!

and stand in line to win a 1510W 185mm Stanley Circular Saw

Send your bright ideas to *The Home Handyman* 'Bright Ideas', PO Box 48 Cramerview, 2060 or email: editorial@homehandyman.co.za. Please include your phone number and physical address during office hours.

Please note: Winners' prizes may take up to six weeks for delivery. The prize sponsor sends out the prizes. Prizes are not exchangeable.



The imbuia tree

A great deal of antique furniture is made from imbuia, making it our tree of the month

By Aarifah Nosarka

Technical details

Common names: imbuia, embuya, Brazilian walnut

Scientific name: *Ocotea porosa* (syn. *Phoebe porosa*)

Distribution: Southern Brazil

Tree size: 30-40m tall, 1.5-1.8m trunk diameter

Average dried weight: 660kg/m³

Janka hardness: 970 lbf (4,300 N)

Shrinkage: Radial: 3.0%, tangential: 6.4%, volumetric: 9.5%, T/R ratio: 2.1

Ocotea porosa in the Jardim Botânico de São Paulo City

Imbuia (*Ocotea porosa*) is commonly referred to as Brazilian walnut because its wood resembles that of a walnut. Imbuia is native to Brazil and endemic to Brazil's Atlantic Forest and bears little botanical relation to real walnuts.

Imbuia produces a dark timber, mainly used for its decorative appeal. When milled, it releases an aromatic scent of nutmeg and cinnamon. In fact, imbuia trees belong to a group of trees known for their strong aromatic scent. These trees produce essential oils and are used in the making of perfumes, incense and scented candles.

The colour of the heartwood can vary substantially, but it is usually medium to dark brown, however a reddish, golden or olive-coloured cast is not uncommon. The sapwood is a light greyish yellow, lighter than the heartwood. Timber from the imbuia has been described as easy to work with, whether using hand or machine tools, and can be stained or polished to an excellent finish.

Timber from the Imbuia tree can be used for high-end joinery, furniture, cabinetry, panelling, flooring, veneers, boatbuilding, gunstocks and turned objects. Over-exploitation over the past century has led to a severe reduction of the availability of mature imbuia trees for harvesting.

The species grows extremely slowly, which is why it has not recovered from exploitation.

Note!

Although severe reactions are quite uncommon, imbuia has been reported to cause nose, throat and skin irritations.

Did you know?

One large tree can provide a day's supply of oxygen for up to four people.

Make a mitred picture frame

Showcase memorable moments with a mitred pictured frame

By Aarifah Nosarka

Before Candida Giambo-Kruger (subscriptions manager) and I scheduled a date with Greg De Villiers at the Vermont Sales Training Workshop for this project, we gathered information on how to make a picture frame. I find having the info at hand before starting helps your confidence and prevents you becoming overwhelmed when doing the project. There are many ways to make a picture frame. The main difference between these is the tools used and finishing touches applied, such as patterns around the edges.

This step-by-step picture frame project serves as a guideline on how to make a wooden picture frame. We used specialised equipment, but if the tools specified here are ones you do not have, there are others that do the same thing. For example, a mitre box can be used in place of a compound mitre saw. Similarly, a handheld router can be used to do the same thing as one mounted in a table.

Of course, the same is true when it comes to the dimensions of the frame. Instead of using the measurements provided, these can be customised to fit the piece of glass you have or the picture you intend to frame. That said, also remember to make provision for things like the channel, which is needed to hold the glass in the frame.



Tools

- Tape measure
- Router and V-groove router bit, round over bit and straight cut bit
- Drill and brad point drill bit
- Clamps
- Kreg pocket hole jig
- Sander



Materials

- Wood glue
- Masonite backing board
- One 1.8m x 65mm x 20mm strip of MDF, or your choice of wood



1 Mark the length to be cut in half

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: We used a 1.8m piece of wood. It was placed on the workbench and the lengths needed were marked with a pencil. Cut along the pencilled lines. This will leave you with two short pieces and two longer pieces.

Step 2: Insert the V-groove bit into the router and adjust the height to cut into the 2mm-thick grooves at a depth of 5mm. Adjust the router table fence so that it cuts the 5mm-deep groove 20mm in from the edge of the strips. Run all of the lengths of wood through the routing table using the same setting.

Step 3: Flip the lengths of wood around. Fit a straight bit into your router table and cut a recess, 5mm deep, along the inside edges of each piece.



4 Round off the edges

Project guide

- Difficulty: Intermediate
- Estimated cost: ±R100 (excluding equipment)
- Estimated time: ±45 minutes



2 Run the lengths through the router



3 Flip the length around and cut a recess

Step 4: Now you can round off the edges of each of the four pieces. This should be done horizontally on the top and bottom sides using a router with a round over bit.

Step 5: We used a compound mitre saw to mitre the corners at 45°. The horizontal lengths for the top and bottom of the frame were 410mm long. Cut these at a 45° angle. The vertical running pieces measured 320mm long. Before cutting the two 320mm pieces, rotate the saw in the opposite direction. Note that even a small degree of error can result in gaps at either the heel or toe of the joint when assembled.



5
Rotate the circular saw and make the cut



6
Glue each mitred cut

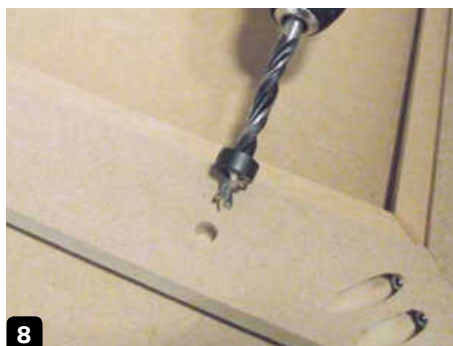


7
Drill screws into the pocket holes

Step 6: Apply glue to each of the mitred cuts and use clamps to hold the frame together while it is drying.

Step 7: Mitres, while attractive, are inherently weak and we decided to make two bore holes with the Kreg jig at each inside corner for extra strength. Drill the screws into the pocket holes at each of the mitred joints, two at the top and another two at the bottom sections of the frame. Adding pocket holes creates an exceptionally tight and sturdy frame.

Step 8: Decide whether your frame will be portrait or landscape, so you know where to



8
Drill four holes using a brad point drill



9
Cut two dowel rods as supports for the frame

drill the holes for the dowels to be placed. We used a brad point drill to create four holes, allowing the frame to stand as both, portrait or landscape. Drill the holes at a 20mm depth, leaving adequate depth to fit the dowel rods.

Step 9: Next, cut two 95mm dowel rods.

Step 10: We used an orbital sander to smooth the carcass of the frame. It was lightly sanded, leaving a smoother finish on the front, the edges as well as the back portion of the frame.

Step 11: Paint two coats of primer on the frame. When the primer is dry, it is ready for your paint of choice.



Tip

The exact size of the backing board depends on the amount of space desired between the picture and the frame. Typically, anywhere from 2-5cm is a common mount, with larger borders on larger picture frames.



Tip

Apply some mineral turpentine on a rag and wipe down the frame. This removes any excess dust that remains after sanding.



10
Use an orbital sander to smooth the wood



11
Apply two coats of primer and then paint the picture frame

Step 12: The glass and backing board are ready to be fitted into the frame. Screw or drill in the four picture frame clips, one on each side (top, bottom, left and right). The clips secure the backing board and picture, and can be rotated for easy access when removing and replacing a picture. ✂



12
The completed frame is held up with dowel rods

**Paint supplied courtesy of Prominent Paints*

Duct tales

Duct tape is an indispensable material used in many circumstances

Very basically, duct tape is made with a gauze-like cloth backed with a pressure sensitive adhesive tape, which is coated with polyethylene. Duct tape is commonly used in situations that require a strong, flexible and very sticky tape.

Duct tape in history

As with most great inventions, there is some disagreement about when duct tape was invented, who invented it and where it was first used. During World War II, the US Military needed a waterproof tape to keep the moisture out of ammunition cases and its water sealing ability lead to it being referred to as duck tape. The military commissioned Revolite, the Johnson & Johnson Permacel Division, to manufacture the tape. It wasn't long before military personnel discovered that the tape could be used for Jeep repair, fixing guns, strapping equipment to clothing and much more.

Today creative individuals and DIY enthusiasts use duct tape for more than quick repairs. The television show *Mythbusters* hosted by Adam Savage and Jamie Hyneman proved that many hard to believe stories about ingenious uses for duct tape were in fact true. This included making a boat from duct tape exclusively and more. The popularity of



Beach bag made of duct tape

the tape is undeniable and there are many other creative uses for it including the production of emergency shoes and making waterproof beach bags.

Advancements in technology

There is now a variety of specialty duct tapes:

- Heat-resistant duct tape – for sealing heating, ventilation and air conditioning ducts.
- Gaffer tape – designed to be removed without leaving a sticky residue. It is used in the audiovisual industry to temporarily secure things like wires or lights.
- One hundred mile an hour tape – (as it is known by racers) has been used in motorsports for more than 40 years to repair fibreglass bodywork, among other things.



Emergency duct tape shoes

- Canoeists' companion – makes it possible for canoeists to continue down the river should they hit a rock and rip open the hull.
- Hikers' helper – ensures that outdoor enthusiasts are prepared for anything.
- First-aid kit on a roll – makes for a great emergency substitute for splints, bandages and tourniquets.

Interesting theories

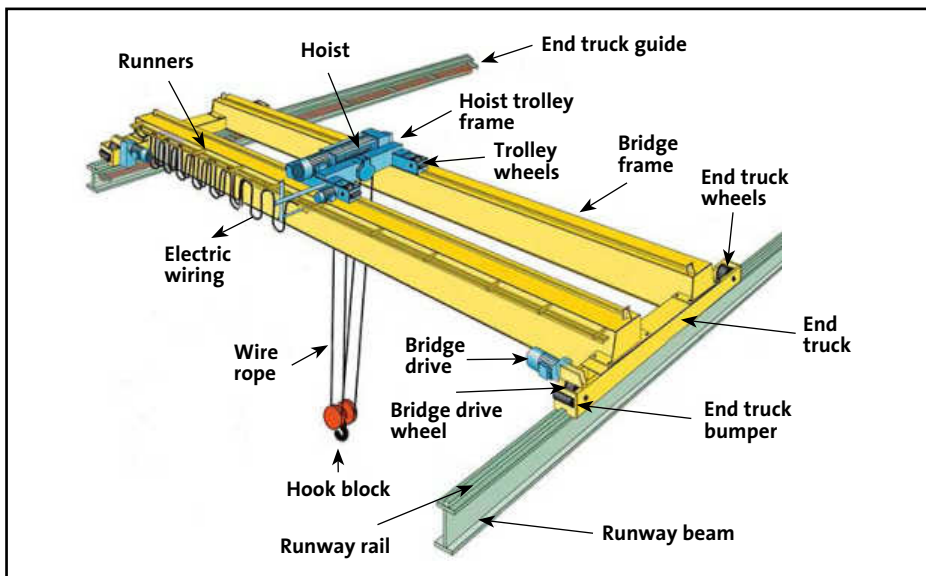
- NASA has alluded to the fact that duct tape has been carried on board every mission since early in the Gemini days.
- It is said that in 1902 the steel cables supporting the Manhattan Bridge were covered in linseed before being wrapped in duct tape.
- In 1910, certain boots and shoes used canvas duct fabric for the upper or for the insole.
- In 1942, Gimbel's department store offered venetian blinds that were held together with vertical strips of duct tape. ✖

I built my own gantry crane!

After doing a lot of research and countless calculations, reader and electronic design engineer Kevin Olson designed and built a gantry crane for his workshop

How a gantry crane works

Workstation gantry cranes, also referred to as overhead cranes, are used to lift and transport moderately sized items around a working area inside a factory or machine shop. The crane has rails that run down the length of the work bay called runway beams. The bridge frame rests on these and has rails of its own for the bridge trolley. The bridge trolley runs on the bridge rails and an electronic hoist is mounted to the trolley. The hoist is essentially a drum with steel cable or chain, called a wire rope, wound on it. At the end of the cable, a hook is fitted for lifting of materials. By moving the bridge and the trolley on top of that it is possible to position the hoist at any point in the work bay.



The gantry crane seen here is for illustration purposes and may differ from the one made by Kevin

My motivation

I built this gantry crane for my workshop to move heavy machinery around by my lonesome. It proved to be a great help when I had to remove my milling machine, which weighs 150kg, from my workshop for routine maintenance of the head.

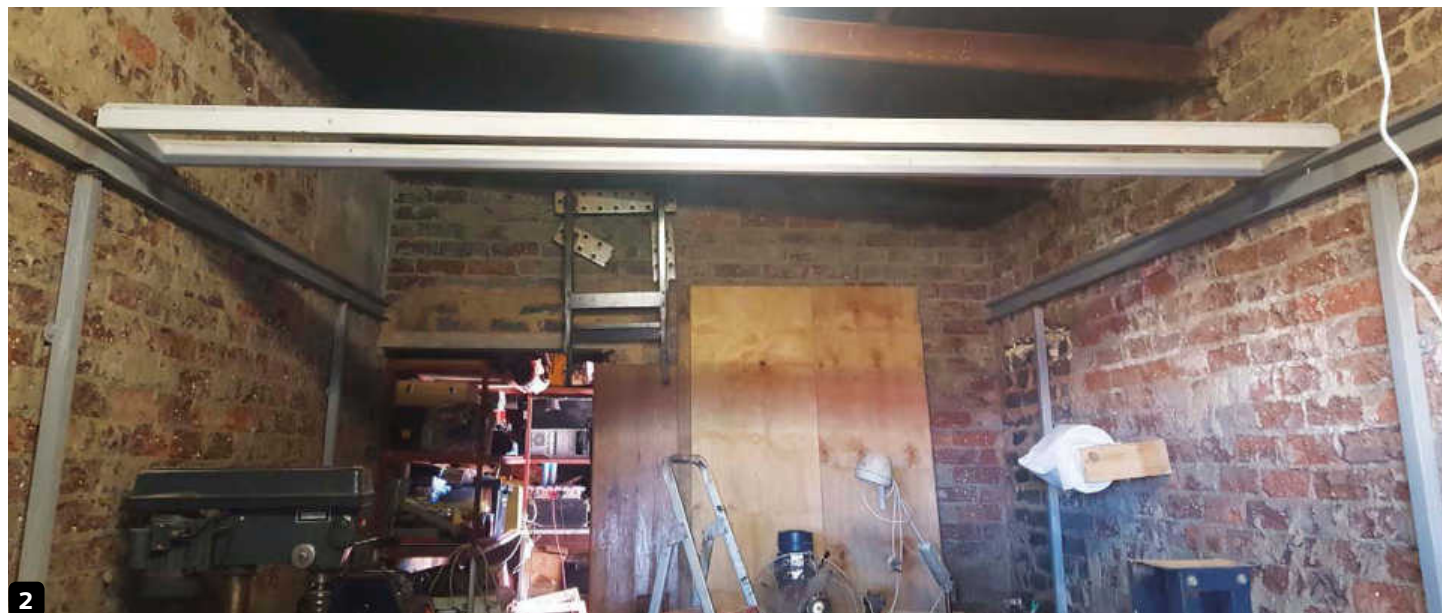
Supporting pillars and runway beams

I started off by cutting the lengths of C-profile needed for the supporting pillars



The pillars and runway beams were fixed to the walls of the workshop with rawl bolts

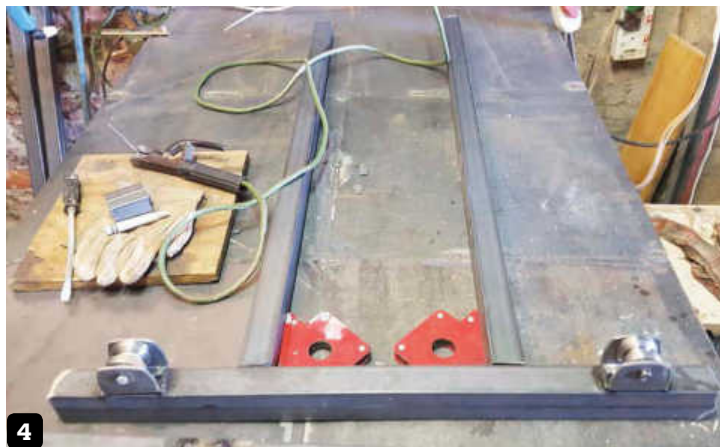
and runway beams. Thereafter, the runway beams as well as the supporting pillars were fixed to the walls of the workshop with rawl bolts. The pillars ran vertically up the walls to provide support for the runway beams, which were fitted above these along the upper portion of the walls, parallel to the floor. Angle iron was welded to the top of the runway beams to make rails for the end truck wheels.



The bridge frame needed to be 3m long and was 300mm wide



3 The trolley frame that houses the hoist runs on top of the bridge frame



4 The end truck was 600mm long and the extensions seen here form part of the structure needed for the addition of the guide wheels



6 The end truck was placed on the workbench and bolted on one side before being welded on the other



5 Careful measurements were taken to ensure the end truck guide rails ran true with the runway beams

The bridge

With the sides done, I measured out the garage width (3m) and used C-profile to make the bridge frame (3 000mm x 300mm). The frame was welded together and angle iron was welded to the top of the frame to make a rail for the bridge wheels to run on.

A 600mm-long end truck was welded to the shorter sides of the bridge frame. Wheels were fitted to the bottom of the end truck and another guide rail was made on the inside of the C-profile of the runway beam to keep the end truck in line. The stabiliser wheels needed to be on roller bearings, making it easier to align the

end truck. I used skateboard wheels after discovering that the original plastic wheels caused it to stick.

A drive motor was fitted to the end truck on the bridge frame to enable full functionality of the crane at any point in the workshop when used in conjunction with the hoist. I used an old gate motor designed to move forwards and in reverse.

The hoist

Then I made the hoist trolley frame 450mm x 300mm to fit over the bridge frame, also using C-profile. My calculations called for the addition of angle iron to strengthen the bridge trolley and enable the lifting of weight.



The completed end trucks, along with the guide wheels, form a triangle structure, enhancing stability of the crane

In addition, a 40mm x 40mm x 5mm (wall) square tube was added to the trolley frame – the hoist was clamped to this before final fixing. Two 8mm holes were drilled into the frame and threaded with a tap, enabling the use of bolts to secure the hoist. Wheels were then added to the hoist trolley frame.

The 'hook block' for lifting was attached to the chain rope and a lifting bar was made from large gauge square tube. I found some 12mm round bar and bent three J-shape hooks. I threaded the straight ends of the



The end truck guide wheels were positioned inside the C-profile of the runway beam

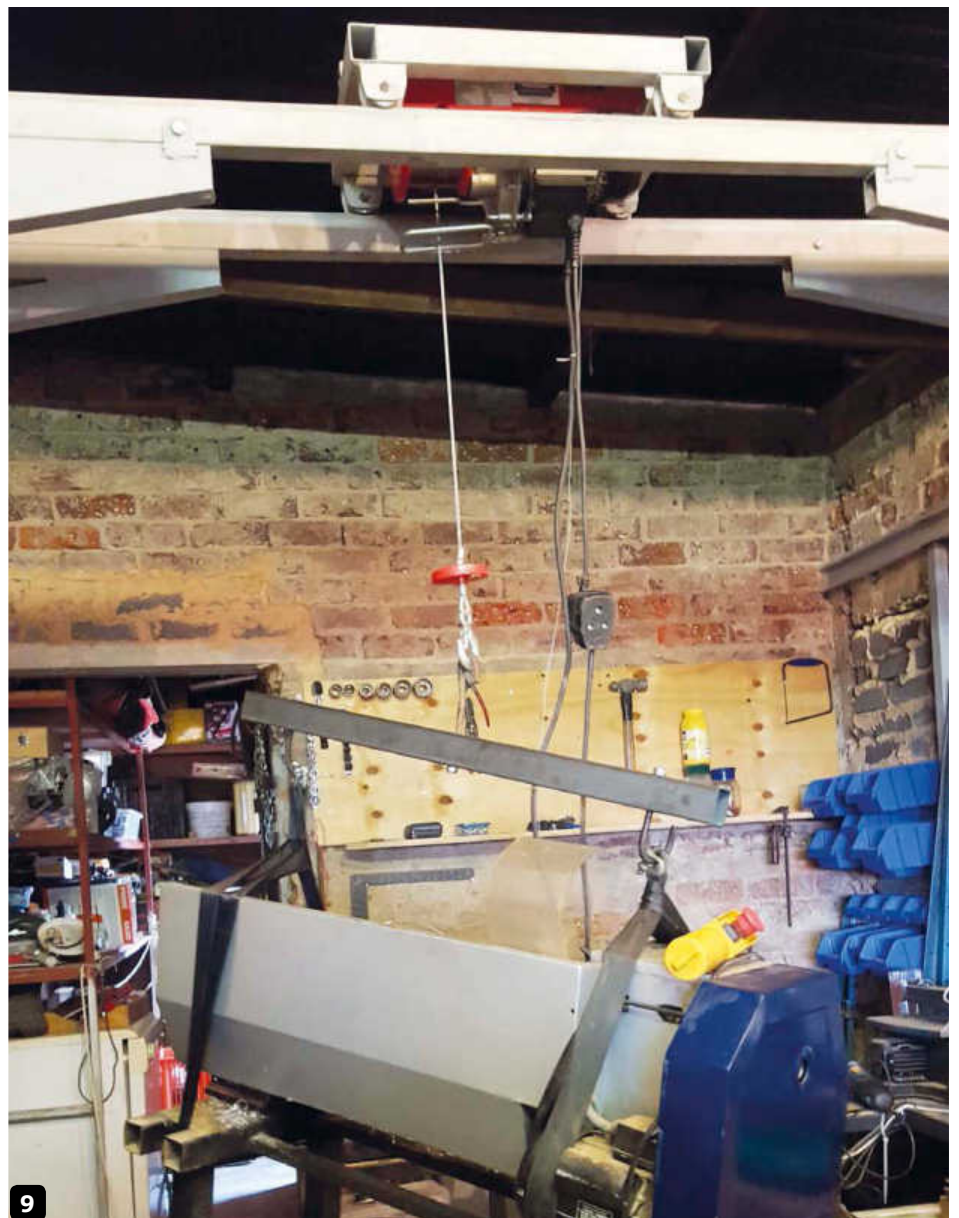
round bar with an 8mm dye, so that the hooks can be moved up or down the length of the lifting bar, depending on the size of the item being lifted.

The electric cabling used to power the hoist needed to move with the trolley frame and bridge trolley. I used curtain rails and looped the cabling on the rail to allow for this.

The last step was to paint my gantry crane and I chose yellow for obvious reasons. ✂

Safety

Lifting equipment is dangerous and the possibility of injury or death increases if a crane is not properly designed, installed or used. You will have to adjust dimensions and do carefully researched calculations when building a crane that satisfies your needs. We recommend that you get your plans checked by a qualified engineer before starting.



The final test – it lifted and moved my lathe to a new position

Upcycled cabinet for your bathroom

A piece of furniture can become outdated, but often all it needs is a simple tweak to regain usefulness. *Clifford Roberts* and woodworker *Andries Eygelaar* show you how



Tools & materials

- Pencil and paper
- A drill and jigsaw
- A good, moisture-resistant varnish
- Bathroom silicone
- Wood glue
- Sandpaper



Before the cabinet's conversion

Where to start

A friend of mine showed interest in an old wooden cabinet I was about to get rid of. He wanted it for use in his bathroom, but it needed a few alterations in order to fit the available space. The legs needed to be shortened, the overhang on either side of the top trimmed and cut-outs added to the back and top to accommodate the plumbing and a basin.

With jobs like this, it is important to be thorough about exactly what alterations need to be made. If possible, examine the piece in its future location; this will allow you to establish the required dimensions

Project guide



Difficulty: Beginner



Estimated cost: Less than R200



Estimated time: ±2 hours

in the position where it will be used. Often, you'll spot something you might not have picked up if it were standing in your workshop, especially if you talk through the requirements while on site.

Design specifications

Shortening the legs of this cabinet was easy enough; the basin had to be at the right height for adults and children. Trimming the overlap on either side was slightly trickier because we wanted to replicate the front edge profile rather than simply leaving it flat on the sides. We didn't have the template, but managed to get close to the original shape using our router and router bits.

To accommodate the basin, we had to cut a hole in the top of the cabinet and take the plumbing into consideration. The backing



1 We removed the backing board to make way for the plumbing



2

Shortening the legs of the cabinet is a simple task

of the cabinet was made with hardboard, so instead of cutting it to allow for the water and drainage connections, we simply removed the backing board completely. Of course, this will only work if the cupboard stands flush against the wall, as ours does.

Step-by-step guide

Step 1: There is little margin for error when cutting a hole in the top of the cabinet. You may find it helps to inspect how others have done it; as a guide, search online for images of your particular basin and how it is fitted.

We began by creating a paper template, tracing the shape where the basin meets and rests on the wood. Our basin is round in shape, with a ridge midway up the porcelain side. About a quarter of the circle is taken up by the hot and cold water pipes and mixer connection.

Step 2: We determined the midpoint of the cabinet width and used the template to locate the optimal distance from the back. When doing the latter, remember that taps and mixers may extrude beyond the rim of the basin, so don't place the basin too close to the wall.



3

A makeshift drafting compass can be fashioned out of a scrap piece of wood to draw a perfect circle



4

Create a paper template



5

Mark out the shape on the top of the cabinet using the template



6

Line up the rings and weld together two sets of 14 and two sets of four rings.

Step 3: Use your power drill to drill a pilot hole and a jigsaw to cut the hole. Work conservatively to ensure a snug fit when you insert the basin. Make sure the edges are neat and smooth to remove pressure points that could cause the basin to sit unevenly or break.

Step 4: Consideration must be given to the change in function of the piece. If you want it to be durable and last, you need to determine what kind of protection it needs. Our cabinet top will be exposed to some moisture, so before fitting the basin, we gave the cabinet top a light sand and



Tip

To apply our template to the top of the cabinet, we had to draw a circle. A nifty trick, if you don't have a drafting compass, is to use a short wooden scrap. Drive a nail through one end and hold the nail at the centre of your intended circle. Mark the desired radius of your circle on the plank and then simply run a pencil at that point as you swivel the scrap around the nail.

applied three coats of Plascon X 44 Woodcare Ultra Varnish, a moisture-resistant polyurethane varnish.

Step 5: Our cabinet had a drawer that had to be removed to make way for the basin. The simplest way to resolve this problem and keep the cabinet's appearance intact was to separate the front of the drawer from the cavity inside. Using wood glue, we fixed it to the frame over the hole left by the drawer.

Step 6: Once the varnish had dried, all that remained was to put the cabinet in place, connect the water and drainage pipes securely and run a line of bathroom silicone at the join where the basin meets the wood. ✂

► Use a jigsaw for the cavity



Make sure it's a snug fit, then you are ready to fit the pipes

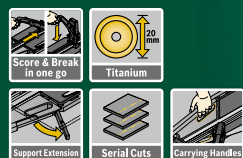


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Jigsaws

The jigsaw is the most versatile of electric saws, says Bob Gillies from Diesel-Electric

By Gareth Greathead

Development of the jigsaw

The first orbital action jigsaw became available in 1966.

This had a mechanism with four settings: 0 was straight up and down, 1 offered a

slight orbital action by pushing the shaft forwards slightly on the upstroke, 2 provided more forward action and 3 was maximum orbital action, ideal for fast cutting in soft materials and doing plunge cuts. "The blade moved forward to cut on the upstroke and on the downstroke it

came back and released the chips, which made metal cutting a pleasure, and the blades ran cooler and lasted far longer."

Another advancement was the addition of a guide wheel set to run against the back of the blade, reducing load from the shaft bushes and keeping the blade accurately on the cutting line, preventing wandering. Some brands had precision cutting guide blocks under the guide wheel, much like the blocks on a bandsaw, and this gave extra stability to the blade. They could be switched onto and off the blade as desired. The air

The jigsaw is arguably the most versatile of all electric saws and is available in battery and air-powered models. "There is virtually nothing this small power tool cannot cut, depending on special product features and the range of blades available. It is portable and can be used for straight and curved line cutting," explains Diesel-Electric's Bob Gillies.

The jigsaw was conceptualised in 1947 when Albert Kaufmann, an engineer at Scintilla power tool company in Switzerland, saw his wife using her sewing machine. He decided to replace the needle with a small saw blade and the Stichsäge or stitch saw was born. Scintilla later produced the world's first jigsaw in the late 1940s.

The first jigsaws had 320W motors and the shaft holding the sawblade went up and down at about 3 000 strokes per minute. "Even though it cut reasonably well, the blade actually rubbed its way through the material and became hot and blunt fairly quickly," says Bob.



The versatile jigsaw can be used for straight and curved line cutting



Tip

Some saws have a small lever to switch off the blowing. This is useful when cutting metal as you often run oil on the cutting line and don't want it to blow away.

Some jigsaws have plastic inserts that clip into the base plate to prevent splintering when cutting

orbital action is not needed as they are designed to rub their way through the material.

- Reverse teeth blades are ideal for cutting Masonite or plywoods where a clean and splinter free upper cut is needed. "Don't use these blades on thick wood or post form tops with the orbital action switched on as it will kick back most uncomfortably!"

that cooled the motor was exhausted behind the blade, thus blowing sawdust away from the cutting line and keeping it visible.

Blades

The wide variety of blades available today makes it possible to cut many materials in many shapes. They include blades for wood with different style and size teeth for hard and soft wood, rough, fast or smooth cuts, and slim blades for tight curve cutting.

- Blades with tungsten-coated teeth will cut dense hard woods and, with careful handling, non-ferrous metals, depending on type, thickness and shape.
- Progressor blades with finer teeth at the top, getting coarser at the bottom and extra long series blades for cutting thick materials, composites or corrugated sheets.
- For cutting tiles, asbestos, fibreglass, bones and similar materials, blades with a coating of coarse or fine carbide grit instead of teeth work best. With these,

How to use a jigsaw safely

- Have the saw running before entering a cut; don't press the blade against the material and then switch it on!
- Wait until the saw blade stops before pulling it out of the workpiece. If you don't, you may damage the wood and break the blade.
- Make sure the blade is inserted and tightened or locked in place firmly and set in the roller guide before starting to cut.
- When cutting metal, reduce the speed and start with orbital action, numbered as setting 1; you can try 2 and 3 depending what you are cutting, but if the saw kicks back, reduce the amount of orbital action.
- Apply only light forward pressure on the saw to let the blade cut into the material

on the upstroke and get rid of the chips on the downstroke. Excessive forward pressure will only make the blade rub against the material regardless of the orbital action and the job won't get done faster.

- Clamp down your workpiece and never hold it by hand in front of the saw!
- Don't use blunt blades; they will only frustrate you and do a bad job.
- Use safety glasses as the blade can throw up wood chips or metal particles, which can be hot and cause eye injuries.
- Always be aware of the positioning of your fingers in relation to the blade.
- Keep the electric cord where you can see it and make sure it's not positioned where the saw blade can cut it. ✖



Features to look out for

- Tilting baseplates allowing for angles to be cut.
- LED work lights to illuminate the cut line.
- Finger guards.
- Variable speed settings to enable cutting of different materials such as plastic.
- Chip guards and dust ports.
- Plastic inserts that clip into the base plate to prevent splintering when cutting plywood and veneers.
- Some saws can be fixed under a worktable, such as a fretsaw, where the material is moved rather than the saw.
- Tool free blade fixing and release.

Bedside pedestals

part 2



Denis Lock writes part two of a three part series describing the steps he took making a pair of bedside pedestals

Last month I covered the design and construction of the carcasses for a pair of bedside pedestals I made for my son (photo 1). This month I will cover the design and construction of the drawers (photo 2). The drawers each consist of a box with an applied drawer front. Some cabinet-makers use the term 'false front', but this term has a negative connotation and I don't use it. The drawer boxes can be

seen in photo 3. The screw holes to attach the applied fronts are visible. The drawer fronts (seen in photo 2) are made of 16mm MDF edged with 6mm sapele mahogany and then veneered with crown mahogany. The drawer boxes (photo 3) are made from sapele mahogany-faced plywood that is edged with 6mm sapele mahogany. Only the top edge is treated this way; the other edges don't show.

Photo 2 also shows that I choose to use full-extension ball-bearing drawer runners (more about this in next month's article). The choice of drawer runner is not an afterthought. You need to decide what runners you are going to use before you start making the drawers. In fact, I recommend that you purchase the runners before you start the drawer construction.

There were two reasons that I made the drawer boxes from plywood. The first is that the carcasses were made from MDF and I didn't want to mix man-made boards and solid wood. Such a mix requires attention to differences in movement (shrinkage and expansion) between the two products. The second reason is that I had quite a large stock of 3mm and 4mm plywood offcuts that I wanted to use up. I had to do 24 laminations (six drawers, four pieces each) of four or five pieces of plywood, each giving a combined thickness varying between 15mm and 16mm thick. This is thick enough; I often see drawers where the sides and backs are 20mm (or more) thick – this is too heavy. Photo 4 shows the lamination process: you can never have enough clamps.



Drawer detail

I did some detailed drawings and calculations of sizes before I started. There is often one overriding measurement in a project. For this project it was the width of the applied drawer face, which is 568mm. The distance between the two pedestal sides is this measurement plus a 2mm reveal on each side: $(568 + 2 + 2)$ mm = 572mm. The back frame (made from pine as it is not visible from the front and is covered by a 3mm MDF panel on the back) is also this wide. The drawer runner specifications (which are given in imperial measurements) call for a $\frac{1}{2}$ " gap between

Drawer boxes



Laminating the drawer components



5
Determining the drawer width

the drawer side and cabinet side. Twice this measurement is 1" or 25.4mm. I round it up to 26mm, which gives a necessary half a millimetre of play. The width of the drawer boxes must thus be 546mm (572mm – 26mm). In the preceding text I give the impression that I took measurements and performed arithmetic on them. This was not the case. I transferred measurements and used 1mm plastic gauges to add or subtract. Photo 5 shows the determination of the width of the drawer boxes by using a dry clamp up of the back frame, two drawer sides, a pair of runners, a 1mm gauge and a dummy drawer box front. This was then transferred using a story stick to set a stop on my radial arm saw (photo 6).

I would normally use a drawer lock cutter on my router table to make drawer boxes (photo 7). As I mentioned, the drawer boxes were made from plywood offcuts. These had been lying in my workshop for a long time and the glue between plies had deteriorated slightly. It was not to the extent that the ply was weakened but sufficient to make the top veneer friable (photo 8) when cut cross grain on a router table. Out with my trusty biscuit cutter:



7
Drawer lock joint

eight biscuits per drawer (photo 9). I always cut biscuit slots with the base of my biscuit cutter on the workbench. It is then very easy to cobble up jigs like the ones seen in photos 10 and 11. This is a lot quicker than making four centre marks on each of the 24 drawer box pieces.

The orientation of the biscuits (edge of front and back, face of sides) can be seen in photo 9. This orientation results in the strongest construction. The continual stress of yanking the drawer open and slamming it closed puts a shear stress on the biscuits, not tension on the glue line between the biscuit and the drawer box side.

The correct orientation of the biscuits results in the strongest construction



6
Cutting to length



8
This is no good



9
Biscuit joint



10
Biscuiting jig #1

The downside of this orientation is that as my drawer box sides are not all identical (the result of laminating pieces of plywood of slightly varying thickness), the drawer box fronts and backs are a slightly different length for each drawer. Does this mean a lot of measuring, calculation and marking? No, it doesn't.

The drawer box sides were all cut to the same length and one edge of each drawer box front and back was trimmed. These 24 pieces were then grouped into six sets and marked a, b, c, e, f and g so they didn't get mixed up. Why was d omitted? Because a's and d's can be confused. The width of the drawer box (determined as shown in photo 5) was used to set a stop on my radial arm saw. A pair of sides were placed against the stop, leaving the correct length for the corresponding front and back to be cut (photo 11). Note the use of Sellotape's blue painter's tape to prevent tear-out on the cross cuts. I swear by this product.

Bad assembly and clamping can ruin the most accurate of woodworking. In order to ensure that my drawer boxes glued up perfectly square, I built an assembly jig using battens, wedges and c-clamps. I started by clamping two chipboard battens on my workbench top as shown in photo 12. An engineer's square ensured that they were at 90° to each other. Further battens and wedges ensured that the drawer box about to be clamped nestled firmly into (photo 13) the 90° corner. Only two sash clamps were needed to complete the



11
Biscuiting jig #2



12
Start of assembly jig



13
Full assembly jig



Contact

Denis Lock runs a router school and shop in Bedfordview, Gauteng. He can be contacted at denis.lock@worldonline.co.za or 082-267-5948. Visit his website at www.routingwithdenis.co.za

assembly of a drawer box. A final check for square was done using two pointed strips of wood and a pair of 50mm c-clamps (photo 14). Photo 15 shows four of the six boxes being varnished.

Next month I will focus on hanging the drawers. Like doors, drawers are also hung. I will discuss my choice of drawer runner and explain the simple gauges I used to ensure spot-on placement. I will also tell you how I achieved accurate line-up of the applied drawer fronts. ✂



14
Checking for square



15
Drawer boxes being varnished

The Woodworker's Corner is a woodworking showcase



Tools4Wood Leap Year Competition winners

The Tools4Wood Leap Year competition ran from 29 February to 30 April. The competition asked woodworkers to submit their projects along with a description and these were placed on the Tools4Wood Facebook page. The one with the most likes won. *The winner of the competition receives a Bosch POF 1400 ACE Router and a six-piece accessory set while the runners-up receive a Bosch 1200 AE Router and six-piece accessory set.*

Winner

Winner of the competition Dolf Joubert says, "I am a toymaker from Empangeni. This is a picture of my latest creation, a freightliner dump truck. My bill of materials showed that more than 200 parts had to be made. I used a variety of woods that I had available, which included imbuia, oak, balau, Oregon pine, Rhodesian teak, silky oak, tambooti, wild olive and good quality imported plywood. Most of the woods that I used are small pieces given to me by friends. I sprayed the truck with four coats of Woodoc 10 varnish.

Truck dimensions:

Length: 350mm
Width: 113mm
Height: 160mm
from the ground
Wheel diameter:
49mm



Runner-up

Runner-up Clive Husband says, "I made these kitchen units for my granddaughters for Christmas and had to make two! Taylor is one year old while Keira is two. I got the idea from the Internet and made both units by myself, with extra hands provided by my wife. The height to the first shelf is only 50cm. Castor wheels were added for ease of movement.

I used 16mm MDF wood with hardboard backing and shelves in the oven and cupboards. The taps were made from dowel sticks with threaded bar to enable them to turn, and the oven switches also have threaded bar. The oven and microwave doors have Plexiglass inserts and the microwave has a fixed 'turntable' for effect. The vinyl stickers were done by a lady in Jeffreys Bay, and apart from my granddaughters' names, we differentiated them by changing the birds and flowers and a personalised message.

Kitchen unit dimensions:

Length: 1 060mm
Width: 400mm
Height: 1 200mm

BOOKSHELF

General manager at Hardware Centre Marius Ackerman reviews the latest in woodworking literature

Small Woodturning Projects

Author: Bonnie Klein

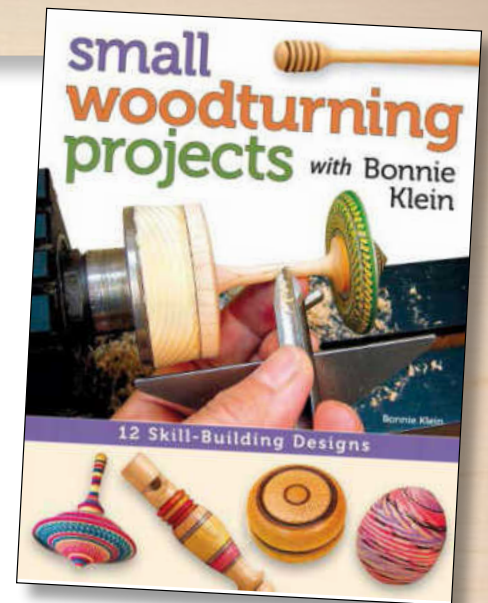
Publisher: Fox Chapel Publishing

Woodturning is an art form that has always captured my attention. The process of transforming a piece of timber, whether a log or machined timber, into a masterpiece evokes a sense of awe in me. While admiring the techniques that the master turner uses, I cannot help wondering how difficult it is for a novice woodworker to learn and apply these techniques.

I believe *Small Woodturning Projects* is the ideal companion when learning about this special form of woodworking. From her workshop, author Bonnie Klein teaches readers the techniques on how to master woodturning. Whether you are an enthusiastic beginner or an experienced turner, these practical and fun-to-make small projects will improve your woodturning skills on any size lathe.

This 71-page softcover publication uses 12 illustrated step-by-step guides to demonstrate a wide variety of techniques and decorative enhancements. All projects are accompanied by full colour photographs and easy-to-follow instructions, and hopefully these guides will help you achieve better results when turning. Added to this are techniques for chatterwork, burned lines and finishing.

Small Woodturning Projects is a must-read for all woodturning enthusiasts and will add to your toolbox of woodturning skills.



For more information, contact Hardware Centre
on 011-791-0844 (Randburg)
or 021-421-7358 (Cape Town)



Runner-up

Claude Stonehouse says, "My project is a kitchen island made with reclaimed pallet wood. I was asked by a friend to make an island for his wife; the only brief being that he wanted a rustic look. I used grass baskets for the drawers, which match the colour of the pine, and they are on full extension runners. The legs are bolted with threaded rod and dome nuts."



Woodworking associations

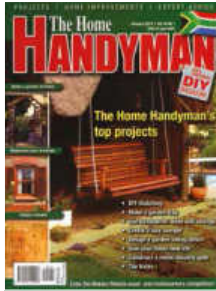
Woodworking associations' details are available on our website at www.homehandyman.co.za

Please send us pictures of your projects.

Write a caption with your name, inspiration, type of wood, etc. and send it to editorial@homehandyman.co.za

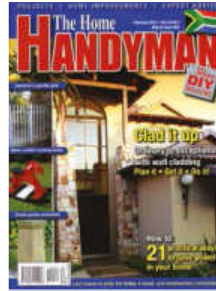
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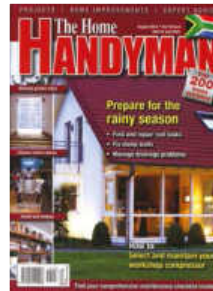
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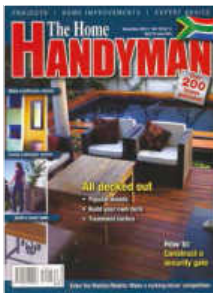
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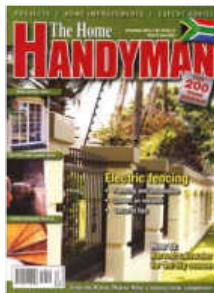
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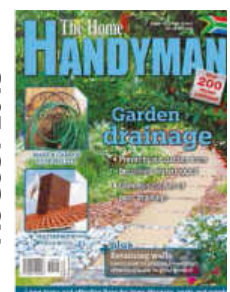
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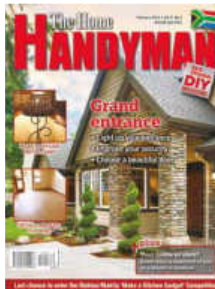
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Let's get social

DIY has a social media side as well. Here are some of the popular posts from our Facebook page this month

Lady DIY'ers

Our social media theme for the month focused on lady DIY'ers. Many of our readers are ladies who are increasingly becoming involved in DIY tasks and projects. If you are a lady DIY'er, email us pics of you doing projects and you could grace our Facebook page. Email to: studio@homehandyman.co.za



DIY pallet dog bed

What a great idea and it looks so easy to make! Featured on our BEST pallet ideas! Follow the link for more info: <https://goo.gl/onpaQC>



Throwback Thursday

My name is Hennie van der Merwe. I have this old mitre saw. I still use this saw daily! Send pics of your old tools to studio@homehandyman.co.za



Denis Lock's 8th anniversary

Tuesday, 19 April 2016 marks *Routing with Denis'* eighth anniversary. In this time I have run 413 courses and welcomed 450 students to my school. An integral part of these activities has been documenting lessons I learnt as articles for *The Home Handyman*. I look forward to doing a lot more of this. *Denis Lock*



At the polls

The results are in for the below poll:
Do you have a downsizing plan pre-retirement?

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Spring day wardrobe malfunction

Reuben the Screwman is invited to *3Talk with Noleen*, but dresses in black for a spring day television insert

Some years back, I was invited to join a panel of professionals on Noleen Mahlangu Shangu's show. This was a great opportunity to humiliate myself on national TV, one not to be missed by viewers. The topic of discussion was, 'Spring day, bring some colour into your home'. The panel consisted of the well-known Keith Kirsten, a representative from a paint company, an interior decorator, Blue Lagoon Pools and yours truly. Back then, I was quite a competitive cyclist and

studio, the beads of sweat had turned into a monsoon. Full panic mode set in and my brisk walk turned into a marathon as I ran around the building looking for Studio B.

When I finally arrived, the team of make-up artists waiting to transform me into a spring day icon had their work cut out – it appeared as if I had just swum the Midmar Mile in my clothes. Powder, spray, blush – more blush, because the first layer ran off my face due to the monsoon of sweat that raged on unabated.

Television is unlike radio, where you can rock up in your pyjamas and no one will be the wiser

my dress code, for a brief period, had moved from the colourful hippy range of haute couture to a rather dashing sportsman look. I developed a clean shaven Lance Armstrong type persona, bar the performance enhancers. Knowing this was going to be televised, I wanted to look my best and portray the image of the 'stud' I imagined myself to be at the time.

Television is unlike radio, where you can rock up in your pyjamas and no one will be the wiser. I dressed in a brand new black Polo shirt, black chinos and the shiniest black shoes you have ever laid your eyes on. On the inside 10 000 butterflies invaded my stomach and the ever inevitable peak hour traffic made matters worse.

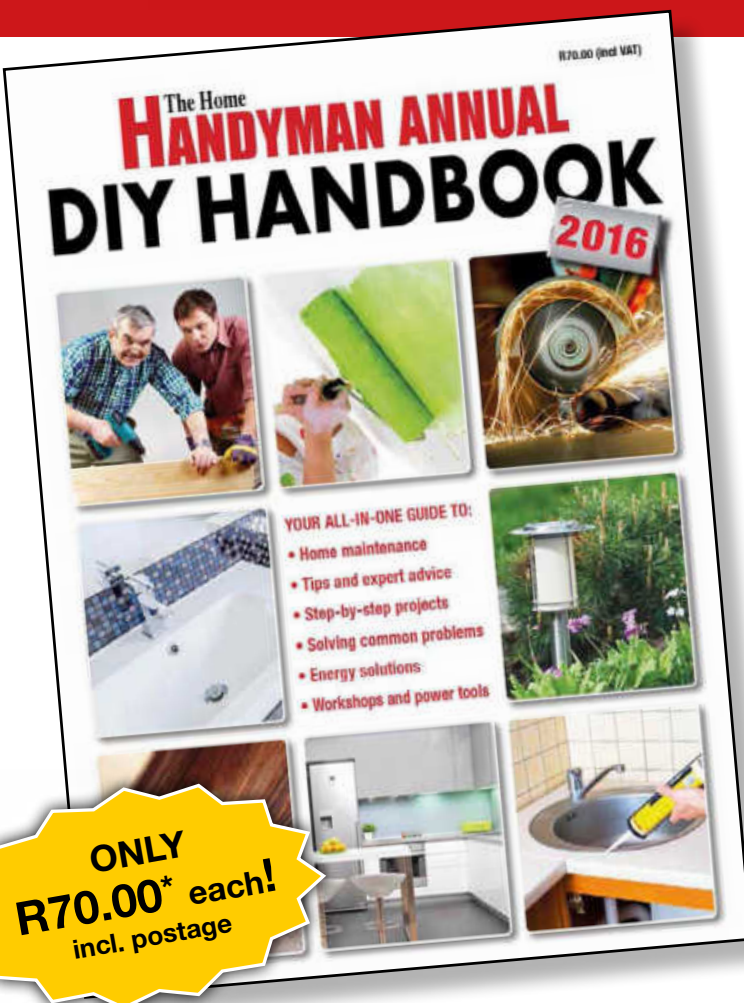
Time was running out and tiny beads of sweat were forming on my brow. Upon arrival at the

The door was flung open and a scrawny rake with a massive set of headphones and a mike, resembling a helicopter pilot shouted, "Three minutes!" Now I was not the only one in a state of panic, not that that was any consolation. The show producer said, "Why has a wardrobe change not been done yet?" Surely not, I spent a fortune on this outfit.

"You cannot go in there dressed like you have jumped set from *Men in Black* on spring day," said the producer. It became apparent that I was the odd one out and I stumbled on stage just as the red silence light came on.

Noleen looked at me and burst out laughing, "Did you know it's a spring day talk; what's with the black outfit?" My heart sank and I wanted the earth to swallow me up. Thankfully my sense of humour was not lost and thank goodness neither was hers. We made light of the situation and the show went off without a hitch. ✖

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